THE

FISHERMAN'S HUT;

OR

ALZENDORF.

A Novel.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

1271

Child of sincerity and virtuous love!
Thine eyes did shine beneath a blissful tear,
That still were turned to the tranquil scene
Where the thin smoke rose from the embow'red cot,
And thou didst think, that there, with smile serene,
In quiet shade, and every pang forgot,
Thou mightest sink in pure Affection's breast,
And listen to the winds that whisper'd thee to rest.

BOWLES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR LANE, NEWMAN, AND CO.
LEADENHALL-STREET.
1805.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

THE

FISHERMAN'S HUT.

2
12,76

CHAP. I.

"She, pent midſt cloiſters dim,
"Had ſeen nought lovely but the ſky and ſtars."

COLERIDGE.

AT the age of ſeventeen, the gardens of the Convent of St. Mary's had bounded the rambles of Joſephine Loſenſtein. Long had ſhe been wearied of thoſe narrow limits, long wiſhed to take a peep beyond their high walls. How did ſhe rejoice! The time now approached, that ſhe was to be

 introduced

introduced to the world. Her heart began to palpitate with ſweet expectation that ſhe ſhould now behold that world her fancy had beguiled ſo many tedious hours in portraying. That it was a perfect paradiſe of delight, ſhe felt ſtrongly inclined to believe; for were not its gaieties, its amuſements, the conſtant ſubject of diſcourſe and regret of thoſe of her companions that had mixed in its faſcinating ſcenes?—And did not the holy mothers continually ſpeak of its pleaſures and dangerous allurements? But with the ſanguine diſpoſition of youth, ſhe thought the danger might exiſt only in the boſom of the rigid ſiſterhood.

"For how," ſaid ſhe, "can they judge, who have all their lives been ſecluded in this diſmal Convent?"

Yet, when ſhe received the expected ſummons from her father, ſhe found her

diſlike

diſlike to the Convent did not extend to its inhabitants; and ſhe wept, with unfeigned ſorrow, her ſeparation from them. The good mothers were likewiſe affected; for ſo long had ſhe been an inmate of the Convent, that they regarded her almoſt as their child. To conſole her young companions, Joſephine promiſed them long letters, containing a minute detail of all ſhe ſhould behold.

As the carriage paſſed the gates, ſhe felt an unreſtrained ſenſation of delight;—ſhe was now indeed to enter that world ſhe ſo much ſighed for. As long as the dark walls of St. Mary's were to be diſcerned, ſhe kept her eyes fixed on them; but it was not with that attachment we generally regard the abode of our childiſh years, when every object reminds us of ſome youthful enjoyment, ſome ſweet and innocent pleaſures. She looked on it as the priſoner regards the cell

where he has been long confined; ſo repugnant is reſtraint to the youthful heart.

She paſſed the city, in whoſe environs St. Mary's was ſituated; but, cloſe and inelegant, it excited nothing but ſurpriſe. Every pleaſurable ſenſation was reſerved to give her heart a more lively ſatisfaction, when the beautiful country beyond it preſented itſelf, when ſhe beheld lofty mountains, and the deep foreſts that covered their baſe—when ſhe looked on the fruitful valley watered by the magnificent Danube. The only object that had given her an idea of a river, had been the little ſtream that adorned the gardens of St. Mary's:—ſo her idea of a foreſt was formed, from the formal bocage that terminated them. No wonder then this ſcene, which would not have paſſed unobſerved by thoſe accuſtomed to contemplate the beauties of creation, filled the boſom of the

the recluſe with enthuſiaſtic delight. But new objects preſented to her freſh ſources of pleaſure, and her admiration was ſtill more called forth, when, towards evening, deſcending from a mountain, ſhe beheld beneath her, the noble city of S——, the capital of the Dutchy of that name, its ſteeples, towers, and palaces gilded by the rays of a ſetting ſun. When informed by her attendants that it was the place of her deſtination, ſhe believed her fairy dreams realized, and that it was a paradiſe ſhe was about to inhabit.

Baron Loſenſtein, her father, was a Nobleman, who from his youth had been deeply engaged in the intrigues of the Court, and of courſe his private duties were neglected; and his only child, at the age of three years, had been placed in a Convent: and ſo great was the preſſure of public affairs, it was ſeldom the Baron viſited his lovely neglected daughter.

daughter. But now, as he folded his long-forſaken Joſephine in his arms, he could not forbear a tear of ſelf-reproach, for having thus long committed her to the care of ſtrangers.

How new, how powerful were the ſenſations which agitated the heart of Joſephine, when preſſed to the boſom of paternal love! Her father, ſtill more touched by the ſenſibility ſhe evinced, felt his boſom glow with a thouſand tender ſentiments; and he again embraced her with a ſtill fonder affection.—When they had in ſome degree recovered their emotion, the Baron conducted his daughter into an elegant ſaloon, where refreſhments were prepared for her. When ſhe had regained her compoſure, ſhe beheld with ſurpriſe the magnificence of the apartment, which ſhe believed nothing could exceed, as ſhe

ſurveyed

furveyed its coftly hangings and gilded furniture.

The Baron obferved her aftonifhment with delight, and promifed himfelf much pleafure on the morrow, when he would prefent to her wondering eyes the ftill greater magnificence of many of the apartments of his palace. With the firft beams of morning, as fhe was accuftomed, Jofephine arofe. The novelty of the fcenes fhe was to behold, gave redoubled animation to her ever light fpirits. Every object that caught her eyes, gave her delight; her elegant bedchamber, hung with blue velvet, how unlike the bare walls of the dormitory fhe had been ufed to inhabit; and the old gothic windows, through which daylight fcarce peeped, how charmingly contrafted by the light elegant

windows which opened to a profpect the moft beautiful to be conceived!

The Chateau, fituated a quarter of a mile from S——, was furrounded by extenfive gardens and pleafure grounds, which feemed fkirted only by the dark mountains fhe had paffed the preceding evening. The gentle river that wound through the grounds, the woods and groves with which they were interfperfed, gave to her lively imagination a perfect idea of Elyfium. Her father feemed, by his prefent behaviour, to endeavour to obliterate from her remembrance his long neglect; but in the forgiving breaft of Jofephine, this recollection had no place: for though it had given her pain, as fhe now looked on his kind fmiles, it was no longer remembered. The Baron's heart glowed with paternal pleafure at her artlefs

remarks,

remarks, as he conducted her through noble ſuits of apartments, and galleries hung with exquiſite paintings. Joſephine ſeemed almoſt entranced with wonder; ſhe believed all that was grand and valuable, was centered in theſe chambers. She had heard, indeed, that her father was rich; but what were riches in compariſon with what ſhe now ſaw? She declared ſhe could never tire in ſuch a charming place. Her father ſmiled at her warmth, and told her he was glad to find ſhe could amuſe herſelf, as he was under the neceſſity of leaving her often to attend the Court.

But Joſephine found in a few days it was not quite ſo delightful to live all day gazing at beautiful pictures, and wandering through the galleries of this ſuperb palace; and ſhe began almoſt to regret the Convent, when ſhe remembered her young companions;

and theſe new ſcenes, late ſo faſcinating, no longer charmed her. She ſighed for ſociety. The Baron obſerved her depreſſion, and eaſily divined its ſource; he waited the return to S—— of a young lady of the Court, whom he had fixed on as the future companion of his daughter, that ſhe might in ſome degree be made acquainted with the forms of a circle ſhe ſo ſoon was to enter.

Olivia Weimer, lively and agreeable, did not fail to acquire an intereſt in the heart of Joſephine; and if ſhe was ſtruck with Olivia's gay and eaſy behaviour, Olivia was no leſs pleaſed with the intereſting and ſimple manner of her new friend. Joſephine, delighted with a companion ſo accordant to her wiſhes, pleaſed with the preſent, and her young fancy filled with pleaſant viſions of the future, ſhe had not a wiſh ungratified. She loved to make Olivia deſcribe the *fêtes*

and

and entertainments at which ſhe had been preſent, and with delight anticipated the time when ſhe herſelf ſhould partake of them. But there was one thing hung heavy on her ſpirits; her father had ſaid ſhe muſt firſt make her appearance at Court. She endeavoured in vain to overcome the fears ſhe felt, at the idea of appearing before ſo many people.

"I," ſhe would ſay, "who know ſo little of the world or its forms!"

But it was the Baron's wiſh. Even in the preparation, her father ſhewed his love; nothing was to exceed the grandeur of her appearance. But how was ſhe diſappointed, when, arrayed for the occaſion, ſhe examined herſelf in the glaſs! It was not the Joſephine ſhe had been uſed to ſee; no, how unlike! Olivia told her it was faſhionable; but the ſimple recluſe knew not the

ſtrength of that term, or to how many abſurdities it will reconcile us. Nor were her apprehenſions unfounded, when, in the midſt of the courtly circle, ſhe ſaw herſelf the object of univerſal attention. Every eye was directed towards her; and ſhe heard the loud whiſper ſhe every where excited. With her eyes fixed on the ground, her father led her to the Duke, when her fears totally overpowered her; and ſhe would have fallen, had not a young man, who ſtood by, caught her in his arms. She was inſtantly conveyed into an adjoining apartment, where remedies were ſpeedily applied; and as ſhe ſlowly uncloſed her eyes, how was ſhe ſurpriſed when ſhe found herſelf ſupported by the young Chevalier, whoſe animated looks and enquiries confuſed her; and, aſhamed of the general notice ſhe had excited, ſhe eclared to her father, ſhe

ſhe was perfectly recovered; and once more ſhe was preſented to the Duke, who extended his hand to raiſe her, and, in a voice of ſoothing kindneſs, endeavoured to reaſſure her. He complimented the Baron on poſſeſſing ſuch a treaſure, and introduced her himſelf to his brother, Prince Albert, who approached him.

The gallantry of the two Princes diſconcerted the poor Joſephine. Her father, compaſſionating her feelings, paid his compliments, and haſtened to introduce her to his friends. In vain did ſhe endeavour to evade the faſhionable obſervation of this aſſembly—in vain did ſhe endeavour to evade the ſcrutinizing glances of the women, or the marked obſervation of the men. As ſhe timidly turned her eyes away, ſhe beheld the Chevalier who ſupported her when ſhe fainted;—his eyes, too, were fixed on her;

but his seemed looks rather of pity for her evident distress, than the impertinent gaze of curiosity. Happy was she when freed from this painful ordeal. She declared to her father and Olivia that she thought nothing could again induce her to undergo such another ceremony. Her father smiled, and loved her the more for her innocent fears; but told her she must endeavour to overcome them, as, in a few days, he intended giving a grand entertainment in her honour, at which she must preside.

CHAP.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAP. II.

"So fares it with the children of the earth;
"For when life's goodly proſpects open round,
"Then ſpirits beat to tread the fairy ground.
"But them vain hope and eaſy youth beguile."

BOWLES.

"Lovelineſs was around her as light."

OSSIAN.

"WERE you not delighted with Prince Albert?" aſked Olivia, the next morning. "All the ladies of the Court

are

are abſolutely dying for him! Do you not think him perfectly handſome?—How did he outſhine all others!"

Joſephine replied, ſhe did not obſerve this beauty; on the contrary, thought there was a confident freedom in the expreſſion of his countenance, far from pleaſing.

"If this be your real opinion, Joſephine, give it not words; for Heaven's ſake, be not ſo unfaſhionable! Do you know the Prince and Count Alzendorf are the objects of univerſal admiration?"

Joſephine did not reply; yet in her own mind, whatever this Count Alzendorf might be, ſhe thought ſhe had ſeen one who far ſurpaſſed him, as the form of the young Chevalier roſe before her. She would have ſpoken of him to Olivia, yet ſhe knew not why ſhe felt embarraſſed, and heſitated; but though ſhe forbore naming him, ſhe often wondered

wondered in fecret if he would be prefent at the approaching gala. The *fête* was to be very fplendid; every one was folicitous for an invitation. The young Lofenftein was now become the magnet of general attraction, not only for her perfonal charms, which were feldom equalled, but being one of the greateft heireffes that had appeared for many years.

On the expected night, all the fumptuous apartments of the palace were thrown open for the reception of the guefts, who on their arrival were conducted to the grand faloon, where Jofephine waited to receive them. Nothing could appear more lovely than the lady of the *fête*, fimply habited; her beautiful hair carelefsly fhading her face, gave an heightened foftnefs to its exquifite expreffion. Almoft unconfcioufly her eyes turned towards the door, as if in expectation of

of ſome one's entrance. At length ſhe attracted the attention of Olivia.

"Who," cried ſhe, in a laughing whiſper, "is ſo happy as to intereſt you by their expected appearance?"

Joſephine bluſhed, wondering and ſurpriſed herſelf, that ſhe ſhould be thus anxious to again behold a ſtranger; but her earneſt ſurvey was fruitleſs. No Chevalier appeared; and the hope ſhe ſecretly cheriſhed, had nearly fled, when ſhe beheld him enter. She did not look on him without emotion. He advanced, and having paid his compliments, careleſſly turned from her.

"How could I be ſo intereſted for this man's arrival?" thought ſhe. "He, perhaps, has forgotten he ever beheld me, and I have remembered him ſo often."

This reflection pained her, and for a few moments baniſhed the ſmiles from her face.

face. Of Prince Albert's neglect, ſhe had not indeed to complain; for his whole attention was directed towards her. Delighted with the gay novelties around her, and perhaps not quite inſenſible to the compliments he laviſhed on her, ſhe ſoon forgot the Chevalier, and what ſhe thought his rude indifference.

The ſcene was beautiful, nor had Joſephine, in the wildeſt flights of her imagination, formed any thing half ſo captivating. The gardens were hung with innumerable lamps of a thouſand varied hues and fantaſtic ſhapes; amid this profuſion of light were ſeen maſſes of ſhade, formed by the thick and lofty woods, whoſe gloomy obſcurity but the more ſtrongly heightened the airy brilliance of the ſurrounding ſcenes. The company arranged themſelves in various groups for dancing on a lawn, environed on all ſides by thick trees.

The

The Prince claimed the hand of Josephine, and led her forward. The music struck into a gay and lively air; her heart beat responsive; for over her quick feelings, music had an almost irresistible influence. It could alike move her to sorrow, and awaken her to joy. All was new; she looked on every thing with admiration; nor did the attentions of her partner lessen the fascination. She could not but acknowledge his conversation extremely pleasing, and she wondered she had not thought him handsome.

So totally was Josephine engrossed by her partner, that she had not remembered the Chevalier; but her attention was at length attracted by observing him in earnest conversation with the most beautiful woman she thought she had ever seen. She looked on them for some moments, and how strangely was she affected! The scene, late so

gay, appeared now in her eyes dull; and the dance, but a moment before ſo delightful, grew fatiguing. The Prince perceived the ſudden change; and imputing it to fatigue, tried to prevail on her to ſit down: but ſhe refuſed, the dance being nearly at an end. On its concluſion, the Prince quitting her to procure her ſome refreſhments, ſhe eagerly ſought her friend.

"Dear Olivia," ſaid ſhe, "who is the lady who dances with the handſome Chevalier?"

"And how am I to know, by that appellation, who you mean, among ſo many equally diſtinguiſhed?"

"I mean," replied Joſephine, confuſedly, "the two who are now in ſuch earneſt converſation, and ſeem ſo much engaged with each other. They diſregard the dance."

Olivia ſmiled.

"It

"It is," said she, "the Count Alzendorf I mentioned to you; and the lady," she continued, lowering her voice, "is the beautiful Countess Wolina, the favourite of our Duke, who, it is said, influences all things at Court. And it is likewise whispered that she regards the handsome Alzendorf with more partial eyes than would please his royal master, were he to learn it. But see, they are now approaching; come with me, Josephine, and I will introduce you to her."

"Introduce me, Olivia! and after what you have just now said!"

Olivia laughed.

"You little novice, there is not an assembly so much frequented, so fashionable as Countess Wolina's; her society is sought by every one: besides, what I have said, is only rumour."

Josephine

Josephine knew not why, yet she felt a reluctance to accompany her.

"I do not wish to know this woman," thought she; "and by going to them, perhaps the Count may imagine I wish to attract his attention."

But Olivia would not be denied.—The Countess expressed the most lively satisfaction at this introduction; but Josephine supported the conversation but languidly; and the Prince soon called upon her to conclude her engagement with him. She knew not how it was, but the dance was not so pleasant; his conversation no longer interested her, and she often turned to look on the beautiful Countess. It was agreed they were to change partners. Josephine secretly rejoiced at this arrangement; for it was possible, she thought, the Count might ask her to dance.

Scarcely

Scarcely did ſhe hear the parting compliments of the Prince, or his deſpair at reſigning her hand, ſo intent was ſhe in obſerving the movements of Alzendorf; ſhe trembled leſt any other ſhould ſolicit her hand, and thus put it out of her power to accept his, even though he were to offer it.—Her emotion increaſed when ſhe obſerved her father approaching with the young Count P——, at the ſame inſtant that Alzendorf quitted his ſtation by the Counteſs. Alzendorf, however, firſt advanced towards her; and when he requeſted her hand, and led her to the dance, the ſcene in her eyes not only reſumed its former luſtre, but ſeemed to have acquired additional attraction. The Count's converſation was, like the Prince's, the language of gallantry; yet how different did it ſound in the ear of Joſephine! She liſtened with pleaſed

pleafed attention; the fatigue fhe had fo lately experienced, was forgot; fhe danced with a gaiety that fprung from the heart; her beautiful eyes beamed with pleafure, and many a heart fell a willing facrifice.

It was late when the company retired to an elegant pavilion, to partake of refrefhments. Jofephine lingered fome moments behind on the fteps, to contemplate the beautiful fcene. The thoufand lamps threw around a golden flood of light, whilft the moon fhed a delicious foftnefs on the dark woods, and far feen profpect. As fhe leaned over the baluftrades, fhe forgot the entertainment and her guefts, abforbed in the fweet emotion the fcene had raifed, till recalled by the voice of Alzendorf, as he gently reproached her for depriving the company of her prefence; yet he feemed

not in any haſte to reſtore her to it, but continued converſing on the ſteps of the pavilion.

Joſephine had again nearly forgotten her gueſts, when ſuddenly recollecting the ſtrange appearance her abſence muſt have, ſhe haſtily aſcended, attended by the Count. At her entrance, ſhe was met by her father and the Prince.

"My dear Joſephine," exclaimed the former, "we are ſeeking you! Where have you been? I began to be apprehenſive for your ſafety."

"But our fears were vain, Baron; for you perceive," ſaid the Prince, ſarcaſtically, "ſhe was not unprotected."

Joſephine felt hurt ſhe had, by her inadvertency, given cauſe for ſuch a remark; and ſhe indeed was diſappointed when ſhe

ſaw

ſaw him who had occaſioned it, forſake her, and place himſelf beſide the Counteſs. The Prince, it is true, ſtill kept his ſtation near her, ſtill paid her all his attention; yet when her father whiſpered her, that ſhe was the envy of all preſent, her eyes unconſciouſly turned towards her with whom the Count Alzendorf appeared to be converſing with ſo much intereſt.

The company departed at a late hour. When retired to her chamber, ſhe haſtened to her window, to take another view of the enchanting ſcene; but it was now ſhrouded in darkneſs. The lamps were all extinguiſhed, except here and there one that glimmered faintly through the gloom. The moon had long been ſunk below the horizon; ſhe could not but feel a melancholy ſenſation in contemplating this change of a ſcene late ſo gay. She looked on it ſome

moments, and then closing the window, she sought repose. But in vain; the objects she had so lately beheld, would not be excluded; but Count Alzendorf was, in truth, the principal object that banished sleep from her pillow.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL.

CHAP. III.

> Oh ſerpent heart, hid with a flow'ry face,
> Did ever dragon keep ſo fair a cave?
> Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical!
>
> SHAKESPEARE.

JOSEPHINE, now introduced, entered with avidity into all the diſſipation of S——. Her father was too much flattered by the univerſal admiration ſhe excited, to reſtrain her. Olivia, gay, and paſſionately attached to all that bore the ſemblance of pleaſure, encouraged her yet more. It is true, Joſephine had a ſecret motive, though ſhe

knew it not herſelf. In public ſhe alone ſaw Alzendorf. She continually met Counteſs Wolina:—at firſt ſhe felt towards her a ſtrong diſlike; but ſoon her winning addreſs, her kind attentions, and her inſinuating manners, which few could withſtand, entirely won her heart.

Counteſs Wolina was married when very young, to the late Miniſter, a man paſt the prime of life, of manners haughty and reſerved. Nature had given the Counteſs ſtrong paſſions, and a ſoul ſuſceptible of the moſt ardent love. But ſacrificed to one for whom it was impoſſible to entertain a tender ſentiment, her feelings took a different turn, and ambition alone occupied her heart—alone actuated her conduct of a mind ſuperior to thoſe around her. She directed their movements almoſt imperceptibly to themſelves, and ſo firmly did ſhe

ſhe eſtabliſh her power, that during her huſband's adminiſtration, ſhe ruled every thing. At his death her influence ceaſed not. The Duke had long been enamoured of her charms, (for though paſt the ſpring of youth, ſhe had not loſt its bloom); and over him ſhe reigned with yet more uncontrouled dominion. Whoever wiſhed to riſe at Court, applied to her; every office was at her diſpoſal; and Prince Albert himſelf found it prudent to keep well with the favourite. It was even whiſpered, had ſhe exerted her power, ſhe might have ſhared the throne; but ambition had now to prove a powerful rival: the ſuſceptibilities of her heart had ſlept, but they were not extinguiſhed.

The father of Count Alzendorf dying when his ſon was very young, left him to the guardianſhip of his friend, the late Count

 Wolina,

Wolina, in whofe houfe he was educated till within the laft few years, during which time he had refided in Italy, in compliance with the will of his father, it being the birth-place of his mother. *Alzendorf* returns only to witnefs the diffolution of the Count; he felt and lamented his lofs, for he had been to him a fecond father.

Alzendorf had always loved and efteemed the Countefs; and with the tendereft affiduity he endeavoured to diffipate the grief he believed fhe muft feel at the lofs of fo good a hufband. Countefs Wolina beheld, not unmoved, the graces of her young confoler; fhe liftened to his fafcinating difcourfe, and it awakened in her bofom feelings long dormant. She loved, and doubted not of a return; for how many hearts were her's, unfought, unwifhed? Yet could fhe refolve to deftroy thofe

dreams

dreams of grandeur ſhe had ſo long indulged, till they had become a ſecond nature? In Alzendorf's preſence, love alone poſſeſſed her heart, and ſhe would wonder it ever knew another feeling; but when in public, ſhe received the homage of all preſent—when the proudeſt among them ſought her ſmile, ambition was again arouſed. Thus alternately victor and vanquiſhed, her boſom was agitated with a thouſand conflicting emotions; yet had ſhe learned the arts of Courts, and paſſions, wild and impetuous, raged only within:—a ſmile could equally adorn her face in ſorrow as in joy. Aided by theſe arts, ſhe deluded the Duke with ideas of a tender attachment to him; whilſt ſecretly ſhe was endeavouring to touch the heart of Alzendorf by all thoſe faſcinations ſhe knew ſo well how to practiſe. The

 Duke,

Duke, blinded by the confidence of poſſeſſing her affection, and acquainted with her knowledge of Alzendorf from his infancy, beheld with indifference his conſtant attendance on her. The Counteſs poſſeſſed a mind far above the common claſs;—diſguſted with the frivolous beings around her, ſhe *ſecretly* deſpiſed them, and ſought for ſociety more in uniſon with her feelings.

When ſhe firſt beheld Joſephine, ſtruck with the touching intereſt of her manner, ſo unlike thoſe ſhe had been uſed to aſſociate with, ſhe felt an inſtant attachment towards her; and, endeavouring to make the ſentiment reciprocal, ſhe ſucceeded: for ſhe poſſeſſed the power of making herſelf equally beloved by either ſex.—Joſephine, pleaſed with the charming Counteſs, found in her a ſoftneſs which ſhe thought Olivia wanted.

wanted. Besides, did not her society possess an attraction irresistible? Did she not there see Count Alzendorf?—The Countess entertained not the least fears in thus introducing to him her young friend, child as she considered Josephine; she feared not her making impression on an heart she believed all her own.

Insensibly Josephine's love of dissipation decreased, and she began to think there was a preferable charm in the library or dressing-room of the Countess, to the most splendid ball-room. Her desire of admiration, (which is inseparably connected with a love of dissipation), was no more, and she heard, unmoved, every compliment; yet the glow of pleasure would deepen the roses of her cheek, if she received but the most distant praise from the lips of Alzendorf: though it was seldom her heart was thus gratified, for she thought him cold

in his manners towards her—at leaſt, he did not ſpeak to her as he did to the Counteſs, but rather ſeemed to conſider her in the ſame light, and treated her as a child. And ſo little did the Counteſs dream of jealouſy, that ſhe permitted her to receive leſſons from him in thoſe ſciences, of which ſhe had but an imperfect knowledge; for though educated in ſecluſion, they taught only thoſe trifles which appear brilliant in the eyes of the world: for knowledge that expands and elevates the mind, enters not the narrow precincts of a Convent.—With a heart glowing with the love of Nature, ſhe would liſten with delight, as he unfolded its wonders. Whole hours would ſhe attend to his diſcourſe: time that was not ſpent in their ſociety, was irkſome; and ſhe ſighed to return to them. Yet ſhe knew not that ſhe wiſhed more to ſee Alzendorf than the Counteſs;

Countefs ;—abfent, the moments paffed languidly and long—with them, they flew with a delightful rapidity; but they ftole not unheeded or unimproved—each was marked with the acquifition of fome new idea: her mind was expanded: its energies were called forth, and put in action. She foon acquired a habit of reflection, and ftrength of thought, uncommon in one fo young; yet it diminifhed none of that foft humility, ever her characteriftic.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

> In palpiti, o mio cor! qual nuovo é questo
> Note incognito a me!

JOSEPHINE'S bosom was filled with a sweet happiness that conveyed a charm to all around: her heart open to the impression of pleasure, every thing was capable of inspiring it. The grateful perfume of the flowers, the fields bright with fresh verdure, the pleasant shade of the thick woods, all seemed to enchant her. Josephine deceived herself; it was not the smile of Nature gave her

her happineſs—it was the peace within. But the deluſion laſted not long; too ſoon was ſhe awakened from this trance of bliſs, and the real feelings of her heart were expoſed to her view.

One evening, when with the Counteſs, Alzendorf as uſual was reading to them. The Counteſs quitted the apartment. He ſtill continued reading. It was a volume of the pathetic Goethe.—Now as he portrayed the ſad variety of woe known to an unhappy and, in ſome degree, a guilty paſſion, Alzendorf, as he read, ſeemed to enter into the feelings of the unfortunate lover. The mournful tones of his voice added to the pathos of the tale—it touched the heart of Joſephine; ſhe hid her face with her hands, and wept. He cloſed the book, and approaching her, threw himſelf into the chair againſt which ſhe leaned.

"Joſephine,"

"Josephine," he cried, with solemn earnestness, "you have a tender heart!—you weep for sufferings you can never know! Your bosom, calm and serene, cannot even in idea conceive the tortures of a wretch who feels a passion impossible to be subdued, which daily, hourly increases, in spite of honour—of himself. Oh, it is misery! misery!"

He paused, seemingly overcome by the acuteness of his feelings: at length, starting up, he walked the room with agitated steps. Suddenly he stopped, and appeared about to speak; but exclaiming only—"My God! how have I deceived myself?" he rushed out of the room.

How strange—how inexplicable was this scene to Josephine! It seemed almost to deprive her of sense. Hardly could she enough recall her ideas, to answer the enquiries of the

the Countefs refpecting the departure of Alzendorf. She could only reply, fhe believed he was not well; and making her excufes, fhe haftened home, in the folitude of her chamber to reflect on what had paffed.

That Alzendorf was unhappy, fhe could not doubt; fhe had indeed often obferved a melancholy expreffion fteal over his countenance; but it feemed the fadnefs of fentiment rather than the effect of real grief, and did but give a more interefting foftnefs to each animated feature. That his unhappinefs flowed from love, he had himfelf confeffed; and the tumultuous agitation that arofe in her bofom at this idea, betrayed to the unfufpecting Jofephine the ftrong intereft he held in her heart. She wifhed to hide this difcovery from herfelf; but it was impoffible—fhe felt the conviction too ftrong.

"But

"But he loves not me, or why should he despair? Why should honour oppose it? No, it is not I he loves. Count Alzendorf, the admired of the world, would never bestow a thought on me. No, it is the beautiful Countess!—She, she is the mistress of his heart."

She considered every circumstance, and felt assured the conjecture was just.

Had he not said—"It was a passion daily, hourly increasing?"—And had he not passed those days, those hours with the Countess? He had heard of the attachment of the Duke, and honour forbade him to rival his Sovereign.

It was but too plain, nor could she believe the Countess indifferent to him. She now recollected a thousand incidents. When in private, he was the subject of the Countess's conversation. How was she lavish

in

in his praiſe!—But Joſephine had ſuſpected nothing; for her own boſom had ever echoed them, and ſhe knew not then it was actuated by any particular feeling; but ſhe now looked back with other eyes, and ſhe read love in every recollected ſentence. They were then mutually attached, they would brave the diſpleaſure of the Duke; they would marry; and they would be happy. But the agony that rived her boſom, the bitter tears that bathed her cheek, told her ſhe had not heroiſm enough to rejoice in their happineſs, as ſhe beheld the wreck of her own.

The reſult of theſe reflections was a reſolution never willingly to ſee him more. She would mix in the gay ſcenes with Olivia—ſhe would overcome her paſſion. She was that evening to have gone down the river, to a beautiful pleaſure-houſe of the Counteſs's, ſituated on one of thoſe romantic iſlands with which the Danube is interſected;

interſected; but ſhe knew Alzendorf was to be there, and that which a few hours before added (how much did it add!) to the expected pleaſure, now determined her to ſend an excuſe of indiſpoſition. She wrote the note, and for ſome minutes felt a ſort of exultation, at having thus voluntarily declined an excurſion, the anticipation of which had for many days given her ſo much pleaſure. She flew to Olivia to put an end to reflection; but it is in vain we attempt to fly from ourſelves: and though ſhe ſeemed to liſten to Olivia's gay diſcourſe, ſhe heard nothing. The diſtracted air of Alzendorf was ſtill preſent to her; ſhe ſtill heard the mournful tones of his voice.

Olivia, at length tired of talking without a hope of extracting an anſwer, perſuaded her to accompany her and a party to the Prince's opera; but Joſephine found herſelf

really

really unwell: the agitation of her ſpirits had unfitted her for company. The good-natured Olivia would have put off her engagement, but Joſephine would not permit her; and her abſence was in truth a great relief. A heavy weight ſeemed to preſs on her boſom; ſhe thought the air would reſtore her, and ſhe ſtrolled into the garden.

All nature was changed to her ſick imagination. The dews of evening, as they fell upon the flowers, diffuſed their perfume, but it was no longer grateful; the thick woods gave no ſentiment of pleaſure, but that, unſeen in their gloomy receſſes, ſhe might the more freely indulge her ſorrows. Her feet almoſt inſtinctively turned towards the ſteps of the pavilion; for they had been, for ſome time paſt, the object and boundary of her evening rambles. There, leaning

leaning on the baluftrades, fhe loved to recall thofe fweet moments fhe had firft liftened to the voice of Alzendorf; but they were no longer to be recalled with the fame fentiment. She remembered only it was that night fhe firft beheld the Countefs; fhe remembered the fickne∫s that came over her, as if fhe had a prefentiment the beautiful object fhe then loked on, was to occafion the future evils of her life.

"Oh too faithful prefentiment!" fhe cried; "but for her, Alzendorf might——" She paufed; her heart reproached her. —"No, I will not be unjuft," fhe continued; "the Countefs never wronged me; fhe knew not of my weaknefs: yet, but for her fatal friendfhip, the merits of Alzendorf would have been unknown, unfelt."

Yet fo high, fo exalted did thefe merits

appear, that ſhe believed only to be indulged in the contemplation of them, would be happineſs.—"It is only in ſtriving to forget him, I am wretched!" ſhe would ſay; "then why deny myſelf an innocent feeling that renders me happy?"

Fatal romance of youth! how many ſay with Joſephine—"I will indulge an innocent feeling that renders me happy!"—and they entail upon themſelves a youth of ſad regret and hopeleſs deſpondency, and vain dreams never to be realized. In other moments ſhe would ſee the futility of this reaſoning, and diſdain it. Moſt ſcrupulouſly then did ſhe determine, under pretext of indiſpoſition, to adhere to her reſolution of debarring herſelf the ſociety of the Counteſs. To voluntarily deprive herſelf of ſo much felicity, was no ſlight exertion of ſelf-command.

No

No leſs was Joſephine ſurpriſed than hurt, that during the whole period of this alledged indiſpoſition, ſhe had not received one viſit or one kind enquiry from the Counteſs.

CHAP.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL, THE TANJORE

CHAP. V.

"En songeant qu'il faut qu'on l'oublee, on s'en souvient."

MONCRIEF.

WEEKS passed away; yet was Josephine near the completio of her task?—Ah no! she found it was not in solitude the heart forgets to love. She would try other scenes, mix in every gaiety that offered itself. Thus did she yield, unknowing to herself, to her ardent desire of again beholding Alzendorf. She formed the resolution. Her

eyes brightened with pleaſure—her heart felt relieved of its burthen.

"I will look on men with an unprejudiced eye, and I may not find Alzendorf ſo ſuperior!" exclaimed this young philoſopher.

Her father rejoiced at this reſolution; for he had been alarmed at her late dejection, though he had by no means divined the cauſe. For ſeveral ſucceſſive nights ſhe attended every aſſembly; but it was nightly with leſſened avidity, for ſhe no where ſaw Alzendorf, and her diſappointment taught her what ſhe had hoped.

With her boſom filled with a thouſand fearful apprehenſions and anxious thoughts of what had occaſioned his ſtrange abſence, ſhe forgot that unbiaſſed judgment ſhe had determined to form of other men—forgot that ſhe ſought theſe ſcenes of gaiety, to drive him from her remembrance. The

Counteſs

Countefs alfo was abfent. What torturing apprehenfion did it not awake in her mind? But, too confcious to make any enquiry, fhe obliged herfelf to endure this painful incertitude. Her fears became almoft intolerable; at length fhe faw the Countefs enter, but Alzendorf was not with her. Jofephine knew not whether to approach her when fhe reflected on her long neglect; but the Countefs prevented a longer hefitation, by advancing towards her, and congratulating her on her recovery, but with a coldnefs fhe was unaccuftomed to; and, turning from her, left the poor Jofephine cruelly hurt at a behaviour fhe could by no means account for. Still was fhe reflecting on her late friend's eftrangement, and the myfterious abfence of the Count, her ever conftant attendant, when, on looking up, fhe beheld the object of her meditation. But

how changed! What an alteration had a few weeks effected! How languid—how pale!—Ah! too surely was now explained the reason of his long absence. How severe must have been his illness, to have caused so sensible an effect! Nor was Josephine aware that her own pale countenance had undergone a similar revolution. The fire of her eyes too was fled; the bloom of health was no more. Alzendorf seemed not to observe her. How did she envy those who spoke to him!

"They enquire his malady," thought she, "they condole with him; and I dare only look on him in secret."

Leaning on the arm of the person with whom he was walking, as if in want of support, he advanced up the room towards the place where she stood; when raising his eyes from the ground, on which they were

fixed,

fixed, he beheld her. A ſudden glow paſſed over his cheek; his countenance brightened; he haſtened ſome ſteps towards her. Joſephine, by a ſudden impulſe, held out her hand. Thus ſweetly proffered, it was rejected; and ſuddenly turning from her, he joined the Counteſs, who paſſed at that moment.

Oh, ſweeter to Joſephine had been the ſtroke of death, than this bitter contempt thus publicly expreſſed!—at a moment too, when her heart was ſo ſoftened! It would have ſunk her into inſtant deſpair, had not a ſmile of triumph from the Counteſs, as ſhe paſſed on, arouſed her.

"They ſhall not know how miſerable they have made me—they ſhall not witneſs my weakneſs. I will ſhew them I can be happy and gay as themſelves."

And when preſently the Prince approached

her, ſhe rallied her ſpirits, and received him with a ſmile of pleaſure, to which he was quite unaccuſtomed, and with a complacency which tranſported him. What will not wounded pride effect? In a moment it furniſhed the timid Joſephine with thoſe arts coquettes are ſo long ſtudying, and ſhe ſpoke with a vivacity that appeared to flow from the heart. She feared a moment of ſilence, leſt her falſe ſpirits ſhoud forſake her; yet could not refrain from ſtealing a glance at thoſe it wounded her to look on.

Alzendorf was ſtill with the Counteſs; but he appeared, ſhe thought, ſad, and ſeemed hardly to attend to her apparently animated diſcourſe. She obſerved he frequently turned his eyes towards her, and it redoubled her attention to the enraptured Prince. At length he ſuddenly ſpoke to the Counteſs, and haſtily quitted the apartment,

caſting

caſting an angry, yet ſorrowful look at Joſephine as he paſſed her; and with him fled the ſpirits that had ſupported her. No longer pride called upon her to exert herſelf; grief and ſurpriſe occupied its place, and ſhe returned home—Oh, how much more wretched than [illegible] She had thought, the day [illegible] ſorrows could admit no increaſe; but [illegible] did not then think herſelf the object of Alzendorf's contempt: ſhe believed he loved another, but ſhe looked upon him as her beſt friend.—Oh ye, who have found your firſt friend falſe! ye who, in early youth, have loved, and found that love deſpiſed! ye alone can judge the bitter anguiſh of Joſephine, as ſhe reſted her head on the pillow wet with her tears!

"He knows of my love, yet he deſpiſes me. The Counteſs likewiſe contemns me; but

but why look on me with that ſmile of triumph? I never even in thought rivalled her."

It was this look, and the fear that the Count might imagine her attached to him, made her determine to ſtill frequent the public aſſemb[illegible]to the adulation of the Prin[illegible]affected pleaſure, which, he f[illegible]tered himſelf, ſhe really felt. Thus did ſhe by her own conduct encourage that paſſion which was to mark her life with misfortune.

Alzendorf was ſtill there; but treated her with a diſdain bordering on contempt, or ſometimes looked on her with apparent anger. The Counteſs, from a cauſe equally unknown to her, ſeemed not to wiſh to renew the acquaintance; yet this miſerable Joſephine was the envy of every one preſent—it was ſhe alone that engroſſed the attention

attention of the handſome and inſinuating Prince. He who thought he honoured every female whom he noticed, little could his pride believe ſhe liſtened to him but to forget herſelf. She could not indeed be always inſenſible to his faſcinating diſcourſe; and one night, when liſtening with more than common earneſtneſs, ſhe overheard ſome one behind her demand if it was not the beautiful Mademoiſelle Loſenſtein in ſuch earneſt converſation with the Prince.

"It is Mademoiſelle Loſenſtein," replied a voice ſhe knew to be Alzendorf's; "but hardly can I recogniſe her, ſo changed is ſhe!"—He ſpoke with a deep and heavy ſigh.

"The change is in thy own boſom, Alzendorf!" ſhe had nearly exclaimed, but he had already paſſed on.—"Oh ſtrange and cruel man!"

man !" ſhe thought ; " what change is there in me, but that you have yourſelf effected? You deſpiſe and inſult, and then call me changed!"

The more ſhe reflected, the more dark and myſterious he appeared. A behaviour ſo unlooked for, which ſhe was ſo little prepared to expect, wrung her heart. She was determined, if poſſible, to come to an explanation. That ſhe had in ſome way offended him, his look, his manner told her; but how and in what manner was it poſſible?—How to arrive at this deſired explanation, preſented another difficulty.

" He never ſpeaks to me!—he flies from —he ſpurns me! Alzendorf, I am indeed changed in your eyes!"

Filled with theſe melancholy reflections, ſhe was the following evening ſtanding in one of the receſſes of a crowded room, when

when ſhe perceived Alzendorf. There was a ſtrange and forced gaiety in his manners; a dark and half-convulſed ſmile was on his lips, as he exclaimed—

"The Prince ſeeks you, Mademoiſelle Loſenſtein!"

Oh, how coldly did it ſound to the ear of Joſephine! Fearfully ſhe believed this the moment of explanation.

"Can you ſuppoſe, Sir, I wiſh to meet the Prince?"

"Why ſhould I doubt what is ſo natural, and what appearances ſo much confirm?" ſaid he, haughtily.

All hope, all wiſh of an eclairciſſement forſook her; and, throwing herſelf on a ſeat, ſhe turned her head from him, to hide her emotion. But he, as if unconſcious of the pain he had inflicted, ſeemed not to obſerve her. As ſoon as ſhe had recovered in ſome

degree her ſpirits, ſhe determined on immediately returning home, to ſubject herſelf to no further inſults.

No ſooner was ſhe alone with Olivia, than the latter exclaimed—

"How ſtrange is that Count Alzendorf! For me to-night he even forſook the beautiful Counteſs; yet talked to me of nothing but your attachment to the Prince."

"My attachment to the Prince!" cried Joſephine, in the ex remeſt ſurpriſe.

"Yes. And whe I ſaid I was ſure there was a time when you did not prefer him, he replied—'Joſephine is only variable, and prone to change like the reſt of her ſex; ſhe has their errors and their weakneſs, though I once thought'—— and he clapped his hand to his forehead, as if in agony; but ſoon, ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he turned the ſubject, and almoſt inſtantly recurred to his

firſt

first discourse.—Was it not strange? Why did he thus blame an attachment every one approves?"

"An attachment every one approves!" exclaimed the thunder-struck Josephine; "surely it cannot be believed I love the Prince?"

"And is it not truth?" demanded Olivia.

"Truth! Oh, no!"

"How then has all the world been deceived! You have for some time received his attentions, at least."

"Tell me truly, Olivia, do you believe the Prince loves me?"

"I doubt it not. It is known he means shortly to declare himself to the Baron, your father, to whom I know it has given great pleasure."

At this moment the distracted Josephine perceived the abyss she had formed for herself.

herſelf. How did ſhe regret ſhe had ever ſtooped to diſſimulation! It had in no inſtance ſtood her friend; it had lowered her in her own eyes, it had rendered her yet more contemptible in the opinion of the man ſhe loved, and involved her in difficulties which appeared as if about to overwhelm her.

"Olivia," ſhe cried, "Oh, why not warn me of my danger?—He paid me attentions, it is true; but I looked upon them as the unmeaning gallantries I had heard he delighted in.—How could I believe he would humble himſelf in an alliance with one ſo much beneath him?"

"Conſidering the immenſe riches of your father, perhaps, he may not look upon this connection in ſo diſadvantageous a light; though I know it has raiſed every one's ſurpriſe, that one ſo famed for pride as himſelf,

himself, had not sought in some neighbouring German Court, a wife that might even add lustre to his high rank.—But how can you, my Josephine, object to a Prince, handsome, amiable, young as he is? Oh no! It is impossible you can but rejoice, unless you wish Count Alzendorf to retract his opinion, and convince all the world you are more than woman."

This was touching on a tender theme, and recalled Josephine once more to herself. By what object, what motive could he have been actuated! Could it have been jealousy of the Prince? A secret joy thrilled her whole frame at the bare idea; but the figure of Countess Wolfina rose to its instant annihilation, and a grief at believing herself despised, returned.

"Do not look so melancholy, my Josephine," cried Olivia. "If you cannot love

love him, and our affections are not in our own power,—('Most true,' thought Josephine),—we will hope for the best. As he has not yet declared himself; and as there is, to be sure, a great inequality in your stations, we will hope he will think no more of it.—So be cheerful, my dear friend, and remember only the sweet entertainment we are to be present at to-morrow.

Josephine wished not to go, unmoved by all the bright descriptions given by Olivia, till she persuaded her to be present, to refuse to dance with the Prince, and thus by degrees withdraw herself from his attentions.

Josephine thought this advice sensible, and the only path she could pursue in her unfortunate situation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

"Oh bleſſed night! I am afraid
"All this is but a dream! I hear, and ſee,
"Too flattering, ſweet, to be ſubſtantial."

POOR Joſephine, neceſſitated to undergo freſh trials, found the *fête* of the Baroneſs de B—— an exact imitation of her own—that entertainment which had proved the ſource of all her woe. There ſhe firſt converſed with Alzendorf, and beheld the fatal Counteſs; a remembrance now ſo painful—till of late ſo pleaſing.

pleaſing. She was ſoon joined by the Prince, who ſolicited her hand for the evening. She pleaded indiſpoſition; and if any thing was wanting to confirm her fears of his attachment, his preſent ſolicitude would have aſſured her: and ſhe was obliged to tell him it was only a ſlight headache, to rid herſelf of his importunities, more particular than uſual this night. She knew not how to avoid him, or put Olivia's ſcheme into execution; but, to her great relief, he was ſoon called upon to open the ball, and ſhe fled from the ſpot, fearful he might return.

The dark clumps that were every where diſcernible amid the more lightened part of the ſcene, recalled again her own entertainment to her mind, and ſhe could not forbear contraſting the different ſituations. Juſt entering into life, hope and pleaſure

were

were her companions; no care had her young bosom beyond the present. In a few short months how changed!—Was there a feeling that could more acutely wound a susceptible mind, which she had not known?—Friendship and love had no longer for her an existence; even hope was no more. The peaceful hours of infancy rose to her remembrance; her early friends, each well-remembered scene, the false idea she had formed of the world, then happily unknown to her, all arose to her recollection. Insensibly her thoughts turned to those hours yet more pleasant, more sweet, when an hidden passion gave an interest, an animation to every object it possessed not before. It is true, these recollections only rendered the present more bitter; yet imagination would not be restrained.

Unknowing whither she wandered, she had

had for ſome time entered an almoſt untrodden path of the wood, when ſuddenly emerging from its dark ſhades, ſhe found herſelf on an open plot of graſs, and looking up, beheld Alzendorf pacing up and down with hurried and agitated ſteps. Alarmed, ſhe would have fled, had he not called on her name in a voice of deſpondency, that irreſiſtibly impelled her to ſtop.

"Do you fly me?" ſaid he, as he approached her. "No, no, this once bear with me!"

He ſpoke with a mournful earneſtneſs. How was his whole behaviour changed! Was this the Alzendorf from whoſe inſults ſhe was flying? With trembling emotion, he took her hand;—there was in his manner a ſolemnity that affrighted her, yet a tenderneſs that melted her whole ſoul. She did not withdraw her hand—ſhe did

not

not ſpeak; but leaned againſt a tree for ſupport.

"Joſephine," he at length ſaid, "as I am now about ſeparating from you for ever, (*ſhe ſhuddered*), liſten to me. I know I have behaved to you in a manner no conduct of your's has ever juſtified. That you love the Prince, is no crime; you have never deceived me—it is my own heart alone has deceived me. The bitterneſs has been indeed increaſed by the wild hopes I once indulged."—*He pauſed.*—"As I am now going to ſeparate myſelf from you," he again repeated, with yet added ſenſibility, "forgive me if I ſpeak to you, as my beloved pupil.—Oh God! the moments return to me, when your eyes have been raiſed to mine with enthuſiaſm! In thoſe moments I ſaid—'Joſephine may love me; her innocent and pure heart will be mine!'—and I abandoned myſelf

myſelf to the ſweet deluſion. Yet was it but a clouded joy; ſo dark a fate was mine, that even that thought has ſometimes made my miſery!—That Joſephine might love me, has made me tremble! Yes, I dare tell you my preſumption; but it has been enough puniſhed.—I began this converſation to excuſe, in ſome meaſure, my recent behaviour. I thought you wronged me! —yes, ſurely your conduct was cruel!—No ſooner were you acquainted with my paſſion, (*Joſephine hardly reſpired*), but you fled me. That might indeed be an act of kindneſs, to cut me from hope at once.—But, Oh! it wrung my heart, that at that inſtant you choſe to acknowledge your love for my rival! You taught the Prince to triumph over me!"

Joſephine's feelings could no longer be reſtrained; and with emotion that almoſt

rendered

rendered her voice inarticulate, ſhe exclaimed—

"And can you have loved me, and I have thought myſelf the object of your deteſtation?"

"Ah, Joſephine! can you for an inſtant have doubted my love?—You did, you muſt have known it!" ſaid he, interrupting her. "How often muſt you have ſeen it! Did not my actions, my every word betray it?—Ah! how often did you appear to mark my agitation and that laſt evening we were together, did I not, alas! too fully explain myſelf? Other eyes have diſcovered it! How can it be hid? It is a ſentiment interwoven with my exiſtence! Oh Joſephine! a paſſion more fervent, never was awakened in the heart of man!"

Aſſured of its reality, as ſhe liſtened to

these protestations, the sensation became too powerful; and sinking on a seat near her, her senses had nearly forsaken her, when a flood of tears eased her full heart. Alzendorf threw himself by her side.

"Josephine, am I then such a very wretch, that the bare mention of my passion renders you thus unhappy?—I believe my conduct gives you pain; and sooner than be to you but a cause of grief, I would banish myself from you for ever."

Cut to the heart to hear him speak thus despondently, and unable longer to controul her emotions, she withdrew her handkerchief from her eyes; and looking on him, with a smile of tenderness, which the moonbeam that displayed, but more softened, she said—

"Have tears then but one source?"

Oh, what a heaven of light burst

upon

upon the ſoul of Alzendorf at theſe words!

"Joſephine!" he cried.

But his tongue refuſed to utter more; and, throwing himſelf on his knees before her, he preſſed her hands to his lips, to his heart.

"Joſephine," he at length exclaimed, "from what a load of anguiſh have you relieved me! Ah, how was I ſo long deceived! From how many days of miſery, of heavy ſorrow, might I have been relieved if I had not judged ſo raſhly, ſo falſely!— How ſhall I be forgiven for having wronged you, in aſcribing to you a cruelty of conduct I ought to have known you incapable of!— But you ſpeak not, Joſephine! Have I then ſinned beyond forgiveneſs? But if you knew how I had been led aſtray, my every feeling worked upon, that I had been taught to believe you acquainted with my paſſion,

that you despised and rejected my love, engrossed by the attention of the Prince! I credited the false tale but too readily. Your strange absence since the evening I believed the secret of my heart disclosed to you, the constant attendance of the Prince since that period, all conspired to confirm me in the cruel supposition. And is it a reality?" he cried with energy. "Do you indeed feel interested in my happiness? Repeat to me, Josephine—once more repeat the blissful assurance!"

"Why," said she, with a timid air, "why should I attempt to deny what my heart prompts me to confess? My eyes were indeed opened in that last evening we spent together; but not to your love. I saw you unhappy, and I could no longer hide from myself the strong interest you held in my heart, nor how much I participated in your griefs.

griefs. From that moment I refused to indulge myself even in the innocent pleasure of your society; or, perhaps," continued she, smiling, "I liked not to behold your attentions to the Countess Wolina."

"Oh, why," cried Alzendorf, in extreme agitation, "why recall that detested name! In listening to you, my mind was lost in an excess of pleasure. Why then conjure up that name, to destroy the sweet feeling! Josephine, she is the destroying fiend who so long has bereft me of happiness! It is she who has blasted the past, and even now makes me tremble for the future. She would have bound me in fetters; but this night have I broken them.—You look surprised—I have alarmed you! Forgive my violence; but you know not Countess Wolina. This night has she been disclosed to me. Long, very long have I suspected the

 Syren;

Syren; though diſſimulation has thrown around her its thickeſt veil."

"You judge too haſtily," interrupted Joſephine.

"Blame me not," returned he, "for ſpeaking with ſo much warmth. I repeat again, you do not know Counteſs Wolina. I have ſufficient reaſons to believe ſhe will be my bitter enemy. Implacable in her hatred, ſhe will purſue me to my deſtruction. In concealing our love, can we alone find ſafety; for as ſhe has the will, ſo has ſhe the power over the infatuated Duke. She rules with a tyrant's ſway; and vain is every effort to counteract her influence.—But whither have I been led?" continued he, perceiving the altered countenance of Joſephine. "Is it with theſe pictures our infant love is ſoothed? Are theſe its raptured viſions? Ah, pardon me! it was but a ſhort-lived gloom, called

up

up by the unpropitious name of Countefs Wolina. Better fcenes and hopes prefent themfelves before me. Do not we mutually love? And, filled with that dear idea, what forrow can approach our bofoms? Yes, my Jofephine, we muft, we fhall be happy!"

When thefe hopes and thefe affurances had in fome meafure difperfed the fears that had taken poffeffion of her mind, he entreated her to liften to fome events neceffary for her to learn, that fhe might become acquainted with the caufe he had to fear Countefs Wolina as an enemy. Jofephine, fenfible her long abfence might be remarked and commented upon, refufed to liften to him; fhe would no longer be detained.

"Promife me then," cried he, "to meet me at this hour to-morrow evening, in

fome

E

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI

ſome part of your grounds. I requeſt this on no frivolous pretext; but grieved am I to ſay, it is eſſential to our happineſs and ſecurity."

Joſephine heſitated.

"In no place and in no inſtant," reſumed he, "ſhall we find ourſelves ſecure from the moſt ſcrutinizing obſervation. Conſent then to the only plan that is left us to purſue!"

Thus urged, Joſephine gave an unwilling aſſent, ſeeing no way to avoid it, and eager now to quit him, left the impatient Prince might trace her to that ſpot—an event ſhe dreaded but to think on. With what different ſenſations did they retrace the path by which they entered the wood!

"Confeſs with me," exclaimed the happy Alzendorf, "it was ſomething more than chance directed our footſteps to-night! How,

How, unconſcious of the bliſs that awaited me, did I ſeek theſe gloomy ſhades?—Diſguſted with the ſight of mirth and pleaſure, which I believed reigned every where but in my heart, I was ruminating on the idea I had formed of quitting Germany for ever, when I ſo unexpectedly beheld you. The thoughts of an eternal ſeparation, without one parting word, hung heavy on my heart; beſides, I wiſhed to obtain your pardon for a conduct I had juſt been reflecting on, as moſt unjuſtifiable."

Joſephine forbore to expreſs her feelings, conſcious it was not theſe ſubjects that would haſten her return to the company, who ſhe feared would remark her ſtrange diſappearance. When come within view of the lights, waving her hand with a ſweet adieu, ſhe fled from him. What excuſe to form,

ſhe knew not; at length, determining to leave it to chance, and the ſuggeſtion of the moment, ſhe quitted the wood. The firſt perſons that met her ſight, were the Prince and Olivia.

"Where have you hid yourſelf, my ſweet Joſephine?" enquired the former. "We have ſought for you in vain, and believed that, in conſequence of your indiſpoſition, you had returned home, till I met Mademoiſelle Olivia in the like ſearch. Where could you have hid yourſelf?" again he repeated.

Joſephine, ſpeaking in as an indifferent a tone as ſhe could aſſume, and endeavouring to hide in her heart the joy ſhe feared diſcovering in her eyes, replied, ſhe loved to walk in the woods by moonlight; and as ſhe could not dance, ſhe had indulged herſelf in a ramble.

The

The Prince ſeemed not to doubt her word, and exclaimed gaily—

"Suppoſe we three were to repeat it!"

A ſudden conſternation ſeized Joſephine at theſe words. She ſhould inevitably be betrayed. Alzendorf, ſhe was ſure, was yet in the wood; ſhe even trembled to remain ſo long on its confines!

"No," ſaid ſhe, affecting to laugh, "as you have been ſo much ſurpriſed at my long abſence, what will the reſt of the company imagine, if I lengthen it?" And, haſtily laying hold of Olivia's arm, ſhe moved towards the company.

The ſtranger, joy, now at laſt returned, diffuſed a deeper bloom on her cheek, and gave to her eyes a more than uſual animation. To the Prince, never did ſhe appear ſo lovely. Tranſportingly he gazed on her, determining to haſten certain projects in her favour,

which, he doubted not, would be to her a ſource of joy and triumph. With theſe ideas, he behaved towards her with an attention more marked than uſual; and leſs able than ever was Joſephine to repel it. Conſcious of having ſomething to conceal, ſhe feared, by a ſudden coldneſs, to excite his ſuſpicion; all ſhe could do, was to retain Olivia by her ſide. She could not forbear caſting her eyes around, to obſerve if Alzendorf had yet joined the gay throng, when ſhe perceived Counteſs Wolina. As ſhe looked on her ſoft and feminine form, the ſweet ſenſibility that her face expreſſed, ſhe almoſt doubted ſhe could be the deſtroying fiend deſcribed to her by Alzendorf.

"How beautiful does the Counteſs look to-night!" exclaimed Olivia. "But where can be her handſome friend? I declare I believe

believe ſhe was jealous of me laſt night, and has therefore forbid his venturing in my faſcinating preſence."

The Prince, ſmiling, exclaimed—

"He has then broken the command, for yonder he comes!"

Joſephine looked towards the ſpot pointed out, and beheld him advancing from the houſe, as if but juſt arrived. She rejoiced he had taken that precaution, as ſhe believed herſelf freed from the fears of a diſcovery. The Prince ſpoke to him as he approached. Joſephine dared not turn her eyes towards him her heart beat with tumultuous agitation; and, turning from him, ſhe pretended to be in earneſt diſcourſe with Olivia.

"Will he be ſatisfied," ſhe thought, "with my being with the Prince, whoſe

free behaviour, perhaps, he may think I do not endeavour to reſtrain. But did he not, above all things, recommend concealment and caution? But though he had taught thoſe leſſons, he did not practiſe them; for, from the attentions of Counteſs Wolina, he ſeemed to fly, as if he feared her arts might even enthral him."

Joſephine, afraid to alarm a jealouſy ſhe feared was not entirely diſſipated, determined to follow his example, and ſpeak to the Prince in his preſence; and rejoiced was ſhe that, in a few moments, the aſſembly broke up, when ſhe gladly haſtened with Olivia to the carriage, attended by the Prince, who would not quit her hand. They paſſed Alzendorf. He looked wiſtfully, but did not approach them. The Prince having placed them in, ſtill retained her hand, imprinting

imprinting on it a parting kiſs, notwithſtanding her ſtruggles to withdraw it.

"My lovely Joſephine to-morrow night may not be ſo ſcrupulous," whiſpered he, as he at length releaſed it from his graſp.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

"The ſun returns with his beams! The glittering rocks and green heads of the mountains ſmile!"

OSSIAN.

"HOW ſenſitive is an accuſing conſcience!—'To-morrow night you may not be ſo ſcrupulous,' ſhe repeated to herſelf. "Ah! too ſure he muſt ſuſpect—muſt know of my imprudent engagement!"

But again, ſhe thought the reſt of his conduct betrayed not the leaſt hint of ſuch knowledge,

knowledge, nor was it poſſible it could have reached his ears. She was a little quieted by theſe reflections, till ſuddenly ſhe conſidered they might bear another interpretation.

"Perhaps to-morrow he intends to declare himſelf to my father; my conſent he thinks it needleſs to aſk."

His whole conduct through the night juſtified her ſuſpicions, and ſhe gave herſelf up for loſt. She repeated his laſt words and her fears to Olivia, who endeavoured in vain to comfort her, telling her the words might have a thouſand different meanings; though poor Olivia could not at that inſtant think of any plauſible one.

"Or it is moſt probable," continued ſhe, "he had no meaning at all in the words. You know he thinks too much of his high rank, and the honour he confers on thoſe whom he condeſcends to converſe with, to

be

be ſcrupulouſly nice in the ſelection of his phraſes; therefore do not needleſſly afflict yourſelf."

But moſt unaccountable was it to Olivia, how ſhe could feel ſorrow at an event, which would to her be the ſource of the moſt joyous exultation, and to every other woman. But her attempts to conſole her friend were vain indeed; ſhe knew not the ſecret cauſe ſhe had to grieve.

"If," thought Joſephine, "Alzendorf dreaded ſo much from the ſingle oppoſition of the Counteſs, how much more muſt there be now to fear!—and how ſhall I dare acknowledge to my father my reluctance to obey his will?—for moſt ſurely will he be in the Prince's intereſt."

Yet not long did ſhe indulge theſe cruel reflections. Soon did her fancy return to thoſe contemplations it had been violently wreſted

from;

from; and in the ſweet conſciouſneſs of being beloved by Alzendorf, all her griefs were huſhed to peace.

"Oh! well did he ſay," thought ſhe, "in the boſom filled with that dear idea, how can ſorrow enter!"

It was the laſt thought that warmed her heart, as at length ſhe ſunk into repoſe; and it was the firſt that lightened her to joy, on her awaking. With the rays of morning ſhe aroſe, and haſtened to the caſcade, the ſpot fixed upon for the evening's interview. How did her young heart once more exult in pleaſure!—how did her eyes once more gaze enraptured on the ſcene before her!—how did her heart again become awakened to the ſweet and touching beauties of early morning!

Nothing could be more picturesque than this ſpot:—it was, indeed, neither a lofty nor magnificent waterfall; but

it

it was particularly broken and diſordered. The ruffled torrent ſought in vain one ſmooth outlet, and foamed angrily over its rugged barriers. Its wild banks were ſhaded by flowering ſhrubs; the green plot that ſurrounded it, was fenced by a wood of lofty beach, which rendered it peculiarly ſequeſtered. Little fear could there be of interruption.

Joſephine threw herſelf on one of the rude ſeats that were ſcattered about this romantic glen; and again was the ſcene of the laſt evening preſent to her—again was her heart ſenſible of the hopes and fears ſhe had then experienced—again did the voice of Alzendorf repeat—"Joſephine, we muſt, we ſhall be happy!"—and her boſom thrilled with indeſcribable emotion—viſions of a bliſsful future filled her imagination—bright dreams in which love delights. At length, recalling herſelf from theſe ſeducing

reveries,

reveries, her fears reverted to the myſterious words of the Prince; and ſhe trembled to think on what that day might produce.

With an heart leſs elated from her recent meditation, ſhe returned to the houſe. Joſephine's agitation increaſed as the hour approached; for, expecting viſitors, ſhe had taken her ſtation in the window, and watched, with anxious fears, the road leading from the city, every moment expecting to behold Prince Albert. But the morning wore away, and ſhe had almoſt loſt her fears, at leaſt for that day, and was liſtening unconcernedly to an account given by an old lady of the magnificence of the laſt night's entertainment, given by her good friend, Madame the Baroneſs de B——. Quite novel was the information to Joſephine, who, though preſent, knew little of the matter; when, to her utter diſmay, the Prince was announced.

announced. Noticing the ſalutation of the company by a ſlight inclination of the head, he ſeated himſelf by the trembling Joſephine.

In general company, his manners were uſually haughty and reſerved; but to-day he appeared perfectly abſtracted. Perceiving the reſtraint he had impoſed on all preſent, but which he as uſual did not exert himſelf to remove, he demanded of Joſephine if the Baron, her father, was at home. She bluſhed deeply, and in the moſt apparent agitation, anſwered in the affirmative. He ſmiled at a confuſion he thought ſo auſpicious, though never had he for a moment doubted his ſucceſs, or that he could poſſibly love, and not inſpire a mutual paſſion; for, if report ſpoke true, his amours had been equally numerous and ſucceſsful.

Nature had been indeed beneficent to him; ſhe had given him a ſtrikingly elegant figure; and

and though his lofty brow and whole contour of countenance were expreſſive of haughtineſs, yet ſhe had poſſeſſed his dark eyes with a ſweetneſs and faſcination, which, when he pleaſed, could ſpeak to the heart. She, perhaps, too had gifted him with a juſt and liberal heart; for he was not even now incapable of a generous action, though a pernicious education had done all in its power to eradicate every noble ſentiment, and in their place ſubſtitute overbearing pride, ſelf-love, and an impatience of contradiction. Ever following the dictates of his paſſions, he had early accuſtomed himſelf to the unreſtrained indulgence of them.

The Duke, his brother, had never had any children, and now a widower, appeared to have no intention of again changing his ſtate. Prince Albert, many years his junior, was always looked upon as his ſucceſſor; and from

from the venal flatterers of the Court, he had received an adulation which had destroyed almost every virtue Nature might have implanted in his heart; yet he, haughty as he was, held but a secondary influence, and was obliged to own a superior in Countess Wolina.

From the first introduction of Josephine at Court, he felt for her a secret passion. Long and fierce was the contest between love and pride.—Could he stoop to marry the daughter of Baron Losenstein, a Nobleman of his own Court. It was true she would possess a fortune superior to any subject in the Empire. The degradation was not therefore so great; and it likewise forbade him to think of her in any other light.

It was Josephine herself that decided the contest; for whilst she appeared totally indifferent to him, he could hesitate; but

from the moment her behaviour taught him to believe he had created an intereſt in her heart, doubt had vaniſhed, and pride was vanquiſhed by a ſtronger paſſion. Yet how could he name it to his brother? Was it likely to meet with his concurrence? He hardly dared hope it. But having, at length, overcome his own ſcruples, he was determined not to brook another's oppoſition.

He reſolved, therefore, to conſult his brother; and if, as he expected, he refuſed to conſent to his wiſhes, he determined to effect them without it. He made the propoſed application:—it was, as he feared, received coldly by the Duke, and a future day fixed upon for his final anſwer, which Prince Albert had no reaſon to believe would be favourable to him. Ill could he bear with this delay; and his impatient temper meditated oppoſition to all reſtraint, when, to his no ſmall ſurpriſe, he

he was desired to attend his brother's closet; where he not only received his full consent, but an intimation that he would himself use his influence with the Baron for its speedy adjustment.

Joyful was the intelligence to the impatient Albert. Unknowing and unheeding to what cause to impute this sudden acquiescence of the Duke in his wishes, he thought only of applying to the father of his lovely Josephine, for his he doubted not delighted permission to address his daughter. Yet he determined to restrain himself for some little time at least, that he might indulge himself in the contemplation of, as he thought, her visible partiality for him.

In the evening, he met Josephine at the Baroness de B——'s; and so charmed was he with her behaviour, that he determined not another day should elapse before he declared

declared himſelf. It was for this reaſon he requeſted the audience of the Baron, which ſo painfully agitated Joſephine; it was now ſhe ſaw her worſt fears realized. How did ſhe once again deplore her fooliſh conduct! She could not but be ſenſible ſhe had nouriſhed his paſſion, and fed the growing flame, while, perhaps, a coldneſs of behaviour might have ſtifled it:—ſo agitated was ſhe, ſhe could no longer pay attention to her gueſts; but leaving them to Olivia, ſhe haſtened from the apartment, to vent her griefs unſeen.

She trembled every inſtant, expecting to be ſummoned to the hated conference. She was in ſome ſort relieved, when in about an hour ſhe beheld the Prince's equipage drive through the gates. She expected her father to ſeek her immediately; yet what ſhe ſhould ſay to him, ſhe knew not. What plan could ſhe form—what excuſes

could ſhe dare pronounce? Yet to ſeem to conſent for an inſtant, ſhe felt impoſſible.

"Beſides, what would it avail me?" ſhe cried. "It would only heighten my father's diſappointment and diſpleaſure, when he at length becomes acquainted with my fixed reſolution. If I could but conſult a moment with Alzendorf, I would be guided by his advice."

But ſhe knew it would be ſome hours before ſhe could ſee him; in the meantime, ſhe was left to act for herſelf. Theſe ideas paſſed rapidly in her mind; and on nothing could ſhe decide, when ſhe heard her father's ſteps. He entered, with a countenance as if about to impart ſome happy tidings. He perceived the agitation of his daughter; but he was not ſurpriſed. He imagined ſhe might have anticipated his intelligence, which had rendered her thus diſordered;

he

he haſtened therefore, as he believed, to confirm her ſanguine hopes, informing her that the Prince had juſt been ſoliciting the honour of becoming his ſon-in-law.

"Judge of my joy!" ſaid he.

"It is then true, my father," interrupted Joſephine; "and I am a wretch indeed!"

She had ſcarcely uttered theſe words, when, overpowered by her emotion, ſhe ſunk lifeleſs at the feet of her aſtoniſhed father. He doubted if he had heard right—almoſt flattered himſelf it was but the exceſs of joy. Alarmed, he had called loudly for aſſiſtance, when, after ſome time, ſhe was viſited by returning life. He ordered the domeſtics to convey her to bed. Fearful of agitating her anew by his preſence, he retired, with the weeping Olivia, to another apartment, from whom he ſoon learned Joſephine's antipathy to the addreſſes

of the Prince. It was with extreme ſorrow the Baron thus ſaw his bright proſpects annihilated, on the eve, as he had flattered himſelf, of their accompliſhment.

Baron Loſenſtein was a courtier. He could not forget thoſe views of aggrandizement which had influenced him through life; and when he beheld the evening of his days about to cloſe, as he believed in greater ſplendour than even he had dared to hope, it was a ſevere ſhock to find diſappointment when he ſo little expected it; but he ſtill had hopes that his reaſonings and perſuaſion might have ſome influence with his daughter, when he ſhould repreſent to her what it was that ſhe was thus fooliſhly about to fling from her—power, rank, wealth, all that could ſatisfy the moſt ambitious heart—all that was eſtimable in life; at leaſt ſo thought the Baron, and his

his surprise was the greater, as he found it impossible to comprehend the motive. But when he witnessed her tears, her sighs, her unfeigned reluctance, he could not resolve to sacrifice her to one she abhorred, even to gain himself a crown; for more even than greatness did he love his daughter. He therefore hastened to relieve her mind as much as in his power; for, alas! he foresaw he could but little befriend her, when he considered the impetuous character of her princely lover, and that he had by some means gained the Duke to his interest.

"I gave the Prince no definitive answer," cried he, "to his proposals, referring him entirely to you; though I told him, I doubted not," he continued, with a sigh, "that you would receive them as such an honour deserved."

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI ... ORE

Joſephine ſighed reſponſive, preſſing her father's hand, but replied nothing. The Baron continued ſome time in deep thought. At length, he ſaid—

"There is but one plan left us to purſue: we muſt for the preſent have recourſe to evaſion. Perhaps the Prince, ſo impetuous, when the firſt ebullition of his paſſion is gone by, may think better of a project that would ſo cloſely ally him to a ſubject."—As he ſaid this, the Baron ſighed more deeply than before.—"Would to Heaven he may!" continued he; "for how can I ſay to my Sovereign, I reject his alliance!"

Theſe expreſſions, and the dejected air with which he uttered them, threw Joſephine into a paroxyſm of grief.

"I did not mean to reflect on you, my dear child," replied her affectionate father.

"Happy

"Happy had it been, had you never ſeen this Prince!" and he turned from her to hide a ſtarting tear.

Joſephine began to waver.

"Have I any right," thought ſhe, "to refuſe the wiſhes of my father? Ought I not to ſacrifice myſelf for his repoſe? For what may I not expoſe him to? Is it poſſible to ſay to the Duke, his Sovereign—'I refuſe your alliance?'—In what manner may he, incenſed by this inſult, ſhew his diſpleaſure? Oh that it would fall on my head!—that I might be the only ſufferer!"

Filled with theſe thoughts, ſhe half leaned towards the Baron. The fatal conſent was about to paſs her lips, when the figure of the diſtracted Alzendorf aroſe before her eyes, and ſhe ſunk down again irreſolute.

The Baron at length begging of her to compoſe herſelf, told her he would attend the

the Prince on the following morning, tell him how ſenſibly ſhe felt the honour he would confer on her, but beg ſome little time for reflection on the great change that awaited her; that ſhe was yet but very young, and quite unfit for ſuch a ſudden exaltation.

Joſephine wiſhed the denial to be peremptory, for ſhe had ſuffered already too much by diſſimulation; yet dared not preſs it farther at this juncture, but endeavoured to rejoice that ſhe was thus preparing the Prince for an ultimate refuſal.

Her father now left her, and retired to his library. She ſought to tranquillize her mind for the approaching interview with Alzendorf; ſhe knew it was yet too early to expect him. She, nevertheleſs, haſtened to the appointed ſpot.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

"Take me to thy arms, and ſpeak the words of peace
"To my diſorder'd ſoul!"

OTWAY.

SHE threw herſelf on the ſeat on which ſhe had repoſed in the morning; but no bliſsful viſions of the future aroſe—all was dark and comfortleſs.

"How much ſorrow have I not to give him," thought ſhe, "without one gleam of even diſtant hope!"

Overcome with the idea, her head ſunk

on her arm, which refted on the back of the feat. She had not been there many minutes, before Alzendorf arrived. His eyes lightened with joy, as he beheld Jofephine. He flew towards her with rapture, when, on approaching, he perceived fhe turned not her head towards him.

"She feels, perhaps, a fweet diffidence," thought he, "on being thus proved the moft punctual!"

He haftened to reaffure her; and, feizing her hand, was addreffing her with gaiety, when her pale and forrowful countenance met his view. The fmile fled from his face; his heart funk within him.

"That look of woe, my Jofephine!" he exclaimed, in a faltering voice. "Speak, what has befallen you?"

"Oh Alzendorf! our misfortunes are already begun! The Prince has offered

himfelf—

himſelf—my father urges me——" She heſitated.

"And you have conſented to abandon me!" wildly interrupted Alzendorf; "you abandon me, and you fear to utter the diſtracting truth!—You have deſtroyed me, and you tremble to look on the miſery you cauſe! Oh Joſephine! cruel Joſephine! it was but a few ſhort hours, and you—— But I will not diſtract myſelf with this heart-rending retroſpection."

Joſephine had ſuffered him to continue thus far without interruption; her faculties ſeemed ſuſpended in amazement, at the ſtrange and cruel meaning he had affixed to her words. At length, burſting into tears, ſhe caught his arm as he ſeemed about to fly from her.

"Alzendorf," ſhe tremblingly cried, "from what part of my conduct do you judge thus

lightly of me, to imagine the vows I laſt night uttered, were made only to be broken?" Her voice was almoſt inarticulate with emotion.—"If you had known what I have this day ſuffered, you would not thus cruelly have doubted me!"

Alzendorf's miſconception had had time to diſſipate; his heart began to accuſe him of folly, precipitancy, and cruelty towards his injured Joſephine. He threw himſelf on his knees before her, lamenting his ardent and impetuous paſſions, which continually led him to form a wrong judgment, involving him in errors fatal to his peace, and the peace of thoſe whom he moſt loved. Theſe ſelf-condemnations ſoftened the heart of Joſephine.—Could Alzendorf plead for pardon, and plead in vain?—She pitied, and forgave him.

In the ſweet pleaſure of this reconciliation, they

they for ſome time forgot the evils that had occaſioned it; but Joſephine at length diſcloſed to him the event ſo fatal to their love.

"But you will never forſake me!" exclaimed Alzendorf, as ſhe concluded. "Then why yield ourſelves to deſpair? Still faithful to each other, no earthly power can ſeparate us! Repeat, my Joſephine, repeat here in the ſight of Heaven, a ſacred vow, and I will never doubt more."

Joſephine could not forbear giving this only relief in her power to quiet his perturbed mind.

"Now, Joſephine, I am happy! You are mine, eternally mine; nor will I fear their power! They have none over the mind; they cannot force you to forſwear yourſelf at the altar."

More compoſed as he thus ſpoke, he

reflected on the plan he wifhed Jofephine to purfue. He entirely difapproved the prefent meafures, as he knew they could befriend him but a fhort time, and muft the more exafperate the Prince when the diffimulation was difcovered.

"My Jofephine, fee him!" continued Alzendorf; "declare to him your heart is another's! He is generous—he will not force you into bonds you abhor. Throw yourfelf on his mercy; it is the only way to fecure us from his revenge! If he is fo abandoned, which I do not believe, as to ftill perfift in his purfuit, we have one fure refuge yet; we will efcape him—fly to a diftant country, where his power and his name are alike unknown. You tremble, and turn from me, Jofephine. I know your pure mind would recoil at a ftep fo derogatory to its delicacy, and it was for that reafon I urged it not before;

before; but, alas! my Josephine, it will be the only resource our hard fate will have left us. Believe me, from your interview with the Prince, I hope much; he will be instigated, I doubt not, in his pursuit, by that bitter enemy of my innocent Josephine, Countess Wolina. And now, my love," continued he, reverting to his promise of the preceding evening, "will you listen to a detail, which will unfold to you many things that at present may appear to you inexplicable?"

Josephine signified her earnest wish to be acquainted in what she had incurred the anger of her once much-loved friend.

"Accuse not yourself, but Nature, who has formed you so lovely!" replied Alzendorf, smiling. Taking her hand, he said—"You know, Josephine, my father at his death left me and my sister orphans at an early

early age. Angelica he configned to the guardianfhip of a maternal aunt; and me he left to the care of his friend, Count Wolina, with a defire that I might at eighteen vifit Italy, and remain among my mother's relations till I attained the age of one-and-twenty. I returned, therefore, to my native country only a twelvemonth fince. Soon after my arrival, I had the misfortune to lofe my efteemed guardian. Brought up by him from infancy, I felt for him a truly filial affection; and believing every one connected with him, muft have an equal love with myfelf, I pitied his beautiful, and as I really thought, much afflicted widow, though I have fince every reafon to believe it was but affected. Unfufpicious of artifice, I exerted every means in my power to confole her; indefatigable in, I hope I may fay, a meritorious purfuit, I at length believed

myfelf

myſelf rewarded by the returning ſmiles of the Counteſs. They gave me indeed ſatisfaction; and believing ſolitude could only ſerve to remind her of her loſs, I dedicated moſt of my time to her during the months when, according to etiquette, ſhe could only be ſeen by a few friends; and it was with the moſt lively aſſiduity I endeavoured to divert the paſſing hours of their monotonous tedioufneſs.

"The Counteſs ſeemed ſenſible of my attentions. In a ſhort time, I perceived a viſible alteration in her manners; but it was not an alteration to diſpleaſe a young man like myſelf. Soon our parts ſeemed perfectly changed, and I not unwillingly received thoſe attentions I had ſo unremittingly beſtowed. At firſt I perceived not their ſource, but believed them to reſult from gratitude, till vanity at length whiſpered them to originate in a ſtill warmer

ſenſation;

ſenſation; nor was I deceived. The diſcovery, I will confeſs, was not at that time diſagreeable to me; it flattered me:—for were not thoſe ſmiles ſo laviſhly beſtowed on me, ſighed for by all the men of the Court? Indeed it was reported that the Duke himſelf did not behold her with indifference; and you, my Joſephine, who are acquainted with the Counteſs, who know her wiles, her faſcinations, will forgive me if I own I was not unmoved. I then believed her to poſſeſs every virtue that could adorn a woman—I believed her heart the ſeat of ſenſibility—I ſaw her beautiful as an angel—I knew her mind ſuperior to the reſt of her ſex; and I have often queſtioned my heart why it did not feel its full content, and why there was yet a void in its affections. Your appearance, my Joſephine, the ſimple child of Nature, was the ſolution. From you, I learned

to

to discriminate genuine sensibility, from those irritable feelings and quick passions I had so long mistaken for it. The veil was withdrawn from my eyes; strong also was the contrast between nature and art:—not a look, a smile, a word of the Countess's, but had its aim, its end; whilst you I saw artless and unstudied—your every word and action sunk deep in my heart. Great indeed was the oversight of Countess Wolina in thus placing Josephine Losenstein before my eyes; but she knew the interest she held in my heart, and, happily for me, believed it stronger than in reality it was. She feared not your retiring and unassuming virtues."

Josephine interrupted him, telling him he must cease such flattery, or he would inevitably destroy those virtues he seemed so delighted to praise. Alzendorf, kissing her hand, smilingly continued—

"My

"My Josephine must be content to be thus spoken of. My history is that of my heart. The Countess's oversight even extended farther; she suffered me to instruct you. Oh Josephine! how could I fail to love you! how could you fail to become acquainted with a passion I believed I every moment betrayed!—So many hours as I have leaned by your side, and you have appeared intent only on your studies—so unconscious, how have I wished to infuse into your bosom one spark of the flame that consumed me!—Oh Josephine! did my emotions speak nothing? Did you suspect nothing, often as I have suddenly started from you—sometimes too abruptly quitted you?

"But though you were thus blind, I feared the penetrating observation of the Countess. I dared hardly raise my eyes in her presence—I appeared before her like a culprit—

culprit—I felt I had ſinned againſt her. My heart would not acquit me; for though I now found I loved her not, I had taught her to believe I did. I had then no reaſon to doubt but ſhe was amiable and much attached to me, though my heart would not approve her; ſhe hinted it was for me ſhe had refuſed to become the conſort of the Duke. I felt no gratitude towards her, and the expreſſion of it was inſupportable to me; yet I believed myſelf bound to reſpect her for the ſacrifice. I believed I had gone too far to recede with honour; and loving you as I did, the idea became death to me. I tried to hide my paſſion in the receſſes of my heart; I therefore, in the preſence of the Counteſs, ſeduloully guarded every emotion, looked coldly on you, ſpoke little; but it is difficult to blind the eye of jealouſy, and I almoſt trembled at the attempt.

"Once

"Once or twice, my Josephine, I thought you expressed more than gratitude towards me; and then Countess Wolina, the whole world, were forgotten. I had nearly thrown myself on my knees, and avowed every sentiment of my soul; but recollection would present the cruelty I was committing, in wishing to inspire you with a passion so unfortunate.

Countess Wolina was soon to become known to me; the knowledge, it is true, was not acquired suddenly. One morning more than ever she convinced me of her expectations. In the evening I was reading to you. Touched by the lively representation of a passion not more strong than my own, I betrayed an emotion which could not escape you; my feelings became uncontroulable—in flight only could I preserve myself. I rushed into the garden, and, seeking the remotest shades, I gave myself

myſelf up to all the wildneſs of deſpair. Overcome by the intenſe agony I endured, and quite exhauſted by the violence I had given way to, I fell ſenſeleſs on the ground. On recovering, I found myſelf lying on the couch in the apartment I had quitted. The Counteſs and ſeveral attendants were ſtanding round; but you were no where preſent. As ſoon as the Counteſs perceived me revive, ſhe diſmiſſed the attendants. When alone, ſhe ſpoke not to me, but ſeemed abſorbed in the deepeſt meditation, and the moſt viſible uneaſineſs. I felt no wiſh that ſhe ſhould addreſs me, unknowing how to excuſe my ſtrange indiſpoſition. She at length explained to me that, finding I had ſo ſuddenly quitted the apartment, ſhe had feared ſome indiſpoſition had been the cauſe, and had therefore ſought for me in the garden, where ſhe had at length found me, and had me conveyed into the houſe.

"When

"When ſhe mentioned my ſudden illneſs, I thought I perceived ſomething more than uſual in her voice and manner; but hoping that it was my own conſciouſneſs made me imagine it, I replied I had found myſelf unwell ſoon after ſhe had quitted us: I therefore haſtened into the garden, thinking the freſh air might diſſipate it; but that I ſuppoſed I was overcome by the heat of the weather.

"She liſtened to me with an air as if ſhe would have ſaid—'You cannot deceive me.'—By my embarraſſed manner, I feared to corroborate her ſuſpicions. Happy was I when ſhe recommended my immediate departure, that I might ſeek that repoſe ſo neceſſary to me; but of which I partook not that night. A thouſand ſchemes agitated my already exhauſted mind. At one moment I was reſolved to acquaint the Counteſs with my love for another;

another; but a ſenſe of honour ſoon baniſhed that idea. Unhappy and undecided, I could come to no reſolution; alas! I ſaw no proſpect of alleviation to my miſery! I reſolved at length to be leſs frequent in my viſits, determining rather to relinquiſh your beloved ſociety, than to undergo the penance of uttering proteſtations of attachment, in which my heart had no ſhare; but this frail reſolve was broken when, on riſing in the morning, I received a note from the Counteſs, to remind me of a long projected excurſion on the river, to viſit ſome of the romantic iſlands with which it is interſected. You may remember it, my Joſephine. How much delight had I not heard you expreſs, when mentioning this excurſion! Could I then for a moment heſitate to go, when aſſured I ſhould be bleſſed with your preſence, and thus ſecure to myſelf a few happy hours at leaſt?

To-morrow, did I ſay, will be ſoon enough to put my ſchemes of ſecluſion into practice. Thus reaſons love.

"Judge my diſappointment when, on joining the company juſt about to embark, you were not there! My looks I believe betrayed my vexation. The Counteſs ſeemed narrowly to ſcrutinize, and eaſily to diſcover the cauſe; for, approaching me, ſhe ſaid—'Mademoiſelle Loſenſtein has ſent her excuſes—perhaps engaged in a more pleaſurable ſcheme.'—Her manner alarmed me; it was not that ſoft and exquiſite toned voice to which I had ever been accuſtomed—there was not that ſweet expreſſion of countenance which I had till now beheld. I thought a ſarcaſtic ſmile played on her features as ſhe ſpoke; I refuſed to believe what ſhe uttered.—'No,' thought I, 'Joſephine is indiſpoſed; or it is more probable the Counteſs may have invented herſelf

herſelf an excuſe, to be freed from the preſence of a perſon whom ſhe had found too much admired, and too beautiful, not to become a powerful rival in the general admiration ſhe expected.'

"Occupied with theſe thoughts, and my recent diſappointment, I ſpoke not with my uſual gaiety; and, fearing the company might remark my depreſſion, I rejoiced when we landed. The lonely rocks and deep woods that preſented themſelves, offering an eſcape from the gaiety which diſguſted me, even the gariſh ſunbeam became offenſive, and in a ſombre retreat of excavated rock, I ſought to nurſe my griefs by ſolitary muſing: but not long was I ſuffered to indulge myſelf in meditation; for I was ſoon interrupted by the appearance of Counteſs Wolina. She looked diſturbed, but attempted hide it in a ſmile.

 'Alzendorf,'

'Alzendorf,' ſhe exclaimed, 'you have taken a ſudden paſſion for ſolitude! It was but yeſterday you fled the ſociety of the pretty Loſenſtein, and to-day you quit the aſſembled beauties of the Court, to indulge a ſolitary reverie:—ſurely you muſt have ſome ſweet remembrances which you thus love to recall; or perhaps you have ſome dear memorial of affection, and you make choice of theſe moments, to weep over them unſeen—a picture or lock of hair perhaps.'

"I bluſhed deeply, which I muſt do again, my Joſephine, as I confeſs to you a robbery which you have no knowledge of. One of theſe beautiful locks I had worn next my heart for a length of time, which I had ſtolen as I one day leaned on the back of your chair. I ſuppoſed the Counteſs to have perceived it during my illneſs the preceding evening. I preſſed my hand on my heart, and I felt my treaſure was no longer there.

As

As I ſaid, I bluſhed deeply; but it was the bluſh of anger. I thought ſhe poſſeſſed no right thus to wreſt my ſecret from me, and I determined to be no longer at the pains to conceal it.

"I was about to reply, and demand what ſhe had ſo unjuſtly deprived me of; but perceiving, perhaps, the haughty and unconciliating expreſſion of my countenance, and to prevent an anſwer ſhe feared might defeat her purpoſe, ſhe burſt into tears.

'Alzendorf,' ſaid ſhe, in a tone of mingled love and grief, 'forgive me for thus reproaching you, but my boſom was wrung with anguiſh; yet muſt your heart condemn you. You have not dealt juſtly by me, at once to perſuade me I alone was beloved, and at the ſame time nouriſh a paſſion for another.'

"I could have denied, or retorted upon herſelf, the arts of perſuaſion of which ſhe accuſed me; but I remained ſilent,

unknowing what to ſay, as her tears had ſoftened my reſentment. She ſaw her advantage, and continued to accuſe me of perfidy and deceit; but when ſhe perceived I attempted no defence, nor appeared willing to make any conceſſions, ſhe began to loſe the ſorrowful dignity ſhe had aſſumed, and to yield to all the violence of her paſſions; accuſing you, my Joſephine, of the moſt cruel duplicity, in pretending friendſhip, only to poſſeſs the opportunity of undermining her happineſs. This was indeed too much for me, and I could no longer remain ſilent; but juſtified you from any actions that could militate againſt her peace.

"But ſhe can confeſs to you ſhe loves you, and can bind her charms around your heart,' ſaid ſhe, as ſhe diſplayed to my view the plaited lock of your dear hair.

"Alarmed for my Joſephine, as I marked the ſtrong emotion that agitated

her

her frame, and ſhocked that ſhe ſhould form an opinion ſo erroneous, I confeſſed to her that you returned not my paſſion, and was even ignorant of its exiſtence. I concealed not from her in what manner I became poſſeſſed of your hair. She was inſtantaneouſly compoſed.—I can explain the cauſe of that helliſh calm! At that moment ſhe found all was not loſt; we might yet be divided: and her quick mind glanced over that ſcheme ſhe ſo ſucceſsfully put in practice.

'From what a load of miſery have you relieved my boſom,' exclaimed ſhe, 'in aſſuring me my Joſephine is unchanged—that I may ſtill behold her with undiminiſhed regard!'

"'Her countenance recovered its wonted expreſſion.—'Count,' ſhe continued, taking my hand, 'you have acknowledged Joſephine never ſought to deceive you. Why, therefore, deceive yourſelf? "

loves another—I will not even diſguiſe to you who it is—ſhe loves Prince Albert: often has ſhe in ſecret confeſſed to me her paſſion, and her fears of its never being requited. Believe me,' and her voice became more ſolemn, 'I have no motive in thus betraying her; but the moſt ſincere wiſh to ſave you from the heart-rending pangs of that moment, when your fondly cheriſhed hopes muſt be deſtroyed—it is to ſave you from the pangs I now xperience.'

"She turned from me. I felt as if about to be annihilated. I ſtrove to doubt what ſhe uttered.

'No, no,' ſaid I, 'it is the child of her own fancy, the ſuggeſtion of jealouſy;' yet it wore ſuch an appearance of truth, ſo many circumſtances aroſe in my imagination to corroborate it, that I had no reaſon to believe you had any preference for me; and yet I felt as if that had been the firſt moment I had

received a conviction of it. I ſtruggled for ſome time to gain compoſure enough to ſpeak to the Counteſs, whoſe ſorrow had moved me. I told her, as I had never formed any hopes, I could not feel their deſtruction; that I had never intended to make her unhappy by the diſcloſure of a paſſion, which, being unfed by hope, muſt of itſelf have expired; that I could not look on my conduct in any way criminal towards her, or deſerving the reproaches ſhe had laviſhed on me; as, ſo far from encouraging the involuntary feelings of my heart, I did all in my power to overcome them; and when I found it impracticable, I concealed them.

"But it would be uſeleſs, my Joſephine, to repeat to you the whole of this converſation, or the artifices the Counteſs uſed, to turn my heart from all that was dear to it. She told me ſhe doubted not but you were acquainted

 with,

or ſuſpected my paſſion; but that ſhe was convinced a return was not in your power to make. The idea again preſented itſelf, that this information might be dictated by jealouſy; and I determined to judge only from your own conduct, remembering not that I ſhould behold it through the miſt of prejudice. The Counteſs doubtleſs rejoiced in thus ſucceeding, as it muſt have been even beyond her moſt ſanguine expectation.

"We joined the party on the ſhore; and in the evening embarked on our return, more wretched, more depreſſed than a few hours back. I was yet more deeply abſorbed; I heard not a word of the lively diſcourſe that paſſed, till arouſed by the name of Loſenſtein, which my heart ever acknowledged. Attending, as thus called upon, I heard them lament your abſence; and judge of the agony I endured. They all aſcribed

it

it to ſome engagement far more pleaſant—they ſuppoſed with Prince Albert, whom they ſpoke of as one you highly favoured, and who, in return, was about to commence an open ſuitor for your hand.—What did I not feel? and they, unconſcious of the pain they inflicted, continued their remarks.

'The Counteſs has not deceived me,' thought I; 'it is I alone am blind.'

"To have my worſt fears thus confirmed, was too much! I trembled; my heart died within me—a cold ſweat ſtood on my forehead; my emotions would not have paſſed unobſerved, but that twilight had for ſome time veiled us. I had received a ſhock too great for its effects eaſily to be removed. I paſſed a reſtleſs, agitated night—never even for a moment reſting on my bed. I revolved in my mind every circumſtance of the laſt unfortunate

months of my exiſtence. I ſhuddered as I thought on the tenderneſs with which you once ſeemed to diſtinguiſh me—I thought, preſumptuouſly perhaps, I had thrown you from me. As this idea preſented itſelf, the moſt gloomy deſpair took poſſeſſion of me, I became inſenſible to every object around me. The morning found me in the higheſt delirium of the fever, whoſe attack brought me to the verge of a grave I may with truth ſay I ſighed for, as the only place of reſt I could know, ſo completely were my hopes deſtroyed in this world.

"The conſtant preſence of the Counteſs, I am perſuaded, retarded my recovery; and the hints which ſhe continually gave of your increaſed attention to the Prince, and the total neglect of herſelf, was not information likely to haſten it. Yet did my heart cling to a

ſtrange

ſtrange half-formed hope, that the information might not be juſt; for I thought it ſo unlike Joſephine, to forſake a friend for whom ſhe had profeſſed ſo much—that ſhe ſhould know, as I had been told, that I lay on the bed of ſickneſs, yet not make one pitying enquiry!—no, I determined I would myſelf bear witneſs of your fickle conduct before I would believe.

"As ſoon, therefore, as my extreme weakneſs would permit, and long before prudence warranted, I ventured to appear at a public aſſembly. A ſecond time was I to be deſtroyed. I ſaw you, and I thought, as I looked on your dear countenance, it beamed with pity. The ſweet ſmile fell on my ſick heart as the dews of heaven on the withered plant; but it revived me but for a moment. Juſt when about to ſpeak to you of what I felt on again beholding you, I obſerved Prince

Albert draw towards us, his face dressed in smiles; my imagination painted them of triumph. His sight was abhorrent to me: I turned from him, and thus beheld my last lingering hope annihilated, which had supported me through the hour of sickness, and bade me once again endure the light of day.

"Forgive me, my Josephine, for thus rashly judging—forgive and pity me; forgive me also for the harshness with which I treated you—an harshness which I had not the least right to use, never having made any pretensions that could possibly have hinted to you the interest I took in your conduct. There was a cruelty in it, for which I can never justify myself; but you must allow something for the overflowing of an almost breaking heart.

"Countess Wolina saw the success of her plan, far—far beyond her hopes; she let my grief exhaust itself, never

reproving

reproving me for its indulgence. If this conduct failed to create in my bosom that sentiment she hoped, it at least enabled me to tolerate her society; she had now every reason to rejoice in the completion of her project. She even began to talk of a private union, giving I know not what reasons, from the bequest of the property of her husband, for this privacy. I listened with seeming attention to all her arrangements, and comprehended nothing but that I was about to sacrifice myself to a woman I could not love, whilst my heart was devoted to another. Yet this idea did not excite in me that intense suffering it would have done a few weeks back: my feelings appeared deadened —lost to hope. I became indifferent to every circumstance; I believed I was obeying the call of honour, and this reconciled me in some sort to my cruel destiny. I found she

wished

wiſhed the marriage to be kept a ſecret, and to me it was moſt deſirable. I ſhould not then, in the eyes of the world, have to act the joyful bridegroom.

"I tremble even now, as I recall how near I ſtood on the brink of that abyſs which might for ever have engulphed my happineſs, and, what is yet dearer to me, my honour! I was ſitting a few evenings ago, involved in the moſt mournful contemplation. I felt more than uſual repugnance to my approaching bonds; I was even meditating, if poſſible, an eſcape from their intolerable burthen, by leaving Germany for ever. Italy preſented itſelf as my refuge; and the happy hours I had there known in my infant years, recurred to my remembrance. I was awakened from this reverie by the entrance of my friend Ludoff: he had for ſome time perceived my melancholy, and this evening was ſo ſolicitous to draw from

from me the cauſe, that I could no longer deny to him my confidence. He liſtened to me with earneſt attention; but when I hinted to him my approaching nuptials with the Counteſs, he abſolutely ſtarted, and with ſudden emotion exclaimed—

'You know not then her connection with the Duke.'

"No ſooner had he uttered theſe words, than he ſeemed to recollect himſelf, and looking confuſed, he attempted to recall them; but I ſoon relieved him from his embarraſſment by my unfeigned ſurpriſe, and my earneſt requeſt that he would farther explain himſelf. He then gave me information which, from his attendance on the Duke, and the favour in which he was held, I had no reaſon to doubt the authenticity of, which completely deſtroyed the illuſion that moſt artful of women had ſo induſtriouſly raiſed,

raised, to blind my judgment. I found her earnest request for a secret marriage, was not to evade the will of her husband—no, it was still to ensure her influence over the infatuated Duke; and I was to become the victim of her arts—the dupe of her infernal schemes!

"My rage at this conviction knew no bounds. It was by force only that Ludoff could restrain me from instantly flying to accuse her of her crimes; but how surprised was he, when in an instant my delirium took a different turn! I embraced him—called him my saviour—my deliverer; my heart seemed lightened of the load which overwhelmed it—my spirits rose light as air. I was no longer trammelled—no longer bent to the earth with heavy chains—I was free; and the word conveyed more rapture to my heart, than I believed it again capable of knowing.

"Ludoff,

"Ludoff, alarmed at these extraordinary transports, endeavoured to sooth me into more composure; but I soon convinced him it was cool and deliberate reason taught me to rejoice at my emancipation from intolerable bondage, in which I was at first entangled through youthful levity, and afterwards, impelled by honour, was determined not to recede, though happiness were the forfeit: and now, most unexpectedly, I found myself released by the same imperious sentiment that had before condemned me to misery.

"Together we concerted how we could most effectually defeat the deep-laid schemes of this Circe. For some time I remained stedfast in my determination of openly upbraiding her for her shameless attempt to dishonour me; but Ludoff at length prevailed on me to remain silent, by representing the disgrace he might

might himſelf incur, in thus divulging ſecrets that to him ought to have been ſacred. He finally determined, as the moſt ſafe and effectual plan, that he would himſelf hint to the Duke the Counteſs's apparent partiality to me; and he was well aſſured the Duke would ſpeak of it to her. She muſt of neceſſity, therefore, remain more on the reſerve—at leaſt for ſome time. He pledged himſelf this would ſucceed, as he knew Counteſs Wolina too well, to doubt for a moment which would triumph—love or ambition.

"This ſcheme was too feaſible to be rejected; and none but the moſt pleaſant circumſtances have as yet reſulted from it. The Counteſs has become more cold and diſtant; though hardly can I contain my indignation, when I look on her falſe ſmiles, and think how much unhappineſs ſhe had made me experience. But I will no longer

remember

remember it, my Joſephine," ſaid he, tenderly. "The moment in which you confeſſed you loved me, would recompenſe me for ages of miſery; we will rejoice only, and believe our loves protected by ſome watchful angel; and it will ſtill protect us. Every difficulty ſhall ſink before us!—we ſhall yet be happy in ſpite of the malice of our enemies."

But Joſephine could not feel ſo aſſured, as his words once more recalled the tranſactions of the day. By the recital he had juſt given, ſhe found her difficulties much increaſed; her enemies ſeemed to multiply; and ſhe ſunk into a dejection which even the preſence of Alzendorf could not remove. She feared the project of making the Prince acquainted with her love for another, would only the more inflame his haughty and violent temper. She was conſcious how late

the

the hour muſt be; yet ſhe had a thouſand queſtions to propoſe to him—a thouſand directions to receive in what manner to act in the preſent momentous criſis.

They at length parted, after a mutual promiſe of meeting at the ſame hour the following evening.

CHAP. IX.

"Let the fools who follow Fortune, live upon her ſmiles; all our proſperity is placed in love:—we have enough of that to make us happy."

SOUTHERN.

JOSEPHINE ſaw not her father till late the next day. His look convinced her, on the firſt glance, he had but ill ſucceeded. Indeed, it had been but an unavailing effort; for, on the Duke's unfortunately miſtaking his deſire of an audience, to his earneſt wiſh of returning thanks for the great honour about to be conferred on him, the old courtier's

courtier's courage entirely failed, and he feared to make him acquainted with his miſtake. Thus poor Joſephine found, rather than befriending her, this interview had but more deeply plunged her in misfortune.

All now reſted with herſelf; with dread ſhe awaited the viſit of the Prince, which her father told her would take place that evening. Poor Joſephine was ill prepared for her arduous taſk, now rendered a thouſand times more embarraſſing. Her father had no advice to give; indeed, if he had, his real wiſhes would have been ſo much at variance, it would have carried but little force. She yet trembled with agitation, when the Prince was announced. In a few moments her father and Olivia withdrew, and left her to the dreaded interview.

The Prince, as on the preceding day, kindly attributed her evident diſorder to a ſweet and natural embarraſſment, and haſtened

haſtened to remove it by a reiteration of all that he had ſaid to her father, vows of eternal conſtancy, and proteſtations of his unfeigned ſincerity. Joſephine permitted him to continue uninterrupted; for unable was ſhe to ſummon reſolution enough to ſpeak—her tongue ſeemed to refuſe her utterance; but at length, having himſelf brought his diſcourſe to a period, he looked at her as if for a reply. Now called upon, ſhe collected all her fortitude, and was juſt commencing a reply, with ſaying—"I feel myſelf grateful,"—when, haſtily interrupting her, he exclaimed—

"Talk not of gratitude, my adorable Joſephine—it is I only muſt ſpeak of gratitude; and if it be permitted me, through my life I will evince it! Who enough can be grateful for the approbation of my Joſephine?"

As he said this, he pressed her hand to his lips. She, more confused from this strong conviction of the confidence with which he assured himself of success, remained silent a little longer, to again summon courage enough to renew her task. The Prince still continued—

"Name gratitude no more; it has a chilling sound; it would destroy that flame I would wish to kindle. Forget henceforward that I am a Prince!—look on me only as thy lover—thy Albert!—nor think on those I might have chosen! Remember only you are the elected of my heart!"

These words, which he thought must be so grateful and so consolatory, determined her to be more speedy in her intended declaration, and made her rejoice that she could give this refusal, so greatly did their haughty condescension mortify her.

She

147

She therefore again more forcibly addreſſed him.

"I feel as I ought, my Lord, the great honour you confer on me; but I am not ambitious—I was not educated for the world."

"Oh *Joſephine*!" replied he, impatiently, "it is for that I love you! I know that you, uninfluenced by ambition, will love me for myſelf alone; nobly generous, you would be unaffected by ſuperior rank!"

Joſephine, almoſt in deſpair of being able to undeceive one ſo prepoſſeſſed with a ſentiment as the Prince ſeemed of her attachment to him, exclaimed, feelingly—

"But if the heart is not intereſted!"

"My adored angel, that I had created already a very warm intereſt in your heart, was too preſumptuous an hope; that pleaſing taſk is yet to come. Yes, 'tis I who will

first teach Josephine how to love; from me she shall learn that sweet lesson!"

He still continued in the same assured strain, till stopped by Josephine bursting into tears. The conviction that wrung her bosom of her thorough knowledge of this unfortunate lesson, with the dread of being unable to destroy the idea which seemed to have taken possession of the Prince, had been too much for her feelings; and she was obliged to give them vent.

The Prince looked on her with a sort of doubting countenance, as if unable to account for her tears in his favour, and as unable as unwilling to give them any other interpretation. At length self-love obtained the mastery, and persuaded him her tears only proceeded from her excessive agitation, in a situation so new and embarrassing for so very timid a girl. In order to compose

her,

her, he began converſing on indifferent ſubjects, which had in ſome degree the effect he wiſhed. He likewiſe determined to ſhorten his viſit, hoping on the morrow to find her more compoſed, and under the impreſſion that her behaviour was occaſioned by timidity. She ſuffered him to take his leave; for her ſpirits were already ſo weakened, ſhe felt her inability to renew the converſation.

As ſoon as ſhe heard his equipage paſs the gates, ſending her excuſes for her non-appearance, ſhe haſtened into the garden, convinced it was long paſt the hour of aſſignation. As ſhe approached the caſcade, ſhe expected to behold Alzendorf fly towards her, to accuſe her of neglect of her appointment; but ſhe looked vainly for him —he was no where there! She felt a little

angry that thus a ſecond time ſhe ſhould be the moſt punctual.

"But I ſhall ſee him in a few moments," ſhe thought; and walked backwards and forwards, earneſtly watching each ſhadow that played in the moonlight, till, at length, tired of her continual diſappointment, ſhe ſeated herſelf on the green bank, and endeavoured to drive away the uneaſy ſurmiſes that would ſuggeſt themſelves at this ſtrange delay, by gazing on the ſcintillating worlds above her, and reflecting how often, in the firſt hours of her love (but when ſhe happily dreamed not of its exiſtence), her eyes had been fixed on the ſame reſplendent objects, which he had inſtructed her to name.

"Oh," thought ſhe, "I have taſted of happineſs!"

At

At this moment the object of her meditation ſprung from the thicket which fenced the graſs plot, and, flying towards her, he threw himſelf on his knees before her, claſping her hand to his boſom with almoſt frantic emotion. Alarmed and ſurpriſed, ſhe demanded of him the cauſe of his agitation.

"Oh Joſephine!" he at length exclaimed, "I knew not that I again ſhould be permitted to behold you! I knew not but they had already forced you from me! We have been watched—we have been diſcovered. I know what they can do—I know what is in their power; and I already ſaw you torn from me, and given to another!"

"Alzendorf," replied ſhe, with all the firmneſs ſhe could aſſume, "why do you thus alarm yourſelf? Reflect, it is not in their power. No, never will they force me to be another's!"

"My Josephine, you are too good, too indulgent to all my weaknesses; nor do I know how it is.—I, who am not devoid of courage—who never trembled for myself—fear every thing for you; or how is it that love at once gives me a courage more than human, and the weak fears of a child: for though I tremble whenever I quit your sight, and fear a weight of evils when I even hear your name pronounced, yet for your sake I could encounter every difficulty, smile at all danger."

Josephine at length demanded what reason he had to fear they had been discovered; for, knowing his usual impetuosity, she hoped his alarm might be without cause. But he too well convinced her of its justness, informing her that, on the preceding night, as he was quitting her, he thought he heard a rustling noise behind them; but hinted nothing

nothing, for fear of ufeleflly alarming her. He haftened his adieus, and ftruck into the path from whence the found had proceeded, when inftantly a man fprang from amid the bufhes, and fled.

"In vain," continued he, "did I exert my utmoft fpeed to overtake the fugitive—he was foon far from purfuit. I was only left to conjecture that he was a perfon employed by the ever watchful Countefs, as a fpy upon my fteps; for he had evidently been hid for the purpofe of overhearing our difcourfe. And what other perfon could have an intereft in it? With the moft poignant regret I forefaw thefe fweet interviews could no longer be permitted, for I faw our fecret was betrayed—Ah! it was furely wrong."

"They were ever fo," fighed out Jofephine."

 "Alzendorf

Alzendorf marked not these words of self-reproach; but continued—

"I was convinced my fears were but too true, when, early this evening, I was sent for to attend the Countess. I saw through her art—I saw she wished to prevent my seeing you at the time appointed, and I determined not to go; but when I reflected it would only the more exasperate her, and she would find some other mode of separation, which perhaps might affect my Josephine, I determined to dissemble yet a little longer, and appeared before her with an unconstrained air, as if I suspected nothing. This succeeded, and she believed me ignorant of the knowledge she had acquired; she would have detained me even till now, and I have no doubt but that she secretly enjoyed my uneasiness, and earnest desire to depart. Yet

I was consoled with the idea that I detained her a prisoner equally with myself; and that for this night at least, I had put it out of her power to forward any scheme she might have in contemplation: but I much fear it was only a delay of a few hours; for from the moment the secret was in her power, I am convinced no art will she leave unpractised to separate us.

"Oh, how I longed to apprize my Josephine of the discovery, that she might put the scheme immediately in practice. We had arranged to make, if possible, the Prince forego his pursuit; for in that was my only hope. I relied much on the generosity of his character; it was on these hopes I was musing, when he himself was announced. I felt hope was lost. From that instant I looked on him as the colleague of my bitter enemy. I could easily divine what had called that

frown upon his countenance:—all had not gone right; his diſturbed appearance augured us no good.—Upon his entrance I motioned to depart, and was no longer prevented. Judge of the agony of mind I endured in thus leaving my enemies, without doubt, plotting my deſtruction. Indeed ſo great an effect it had on my mind, that in haſtening towards you, I could not forbear conjuring up a thouſand evils to my tortured imagination. I already believed you torn from me—already hid from my ſight; it is to theſe fears my Joſephine muſt impute my wild behaviour a few moments ſince. Indeed they were not cauſeleſs—we are ſurrounded by danger; nothing but flight can ſave us!—Oh Joſephine! reflect how uſeleſs it is to brave enemies, who could at this moment tear you from me! Joſephine, you have ſaid you love me; and can you reflect, unmoved, on that

that moment which ſhall ſeparate us for ever, and give me to eternal miſery?"

"Calm your feelings, I entreat you, my beloved Alzendorf!—your fears have magnified the danger. It was not ſurely we who cauſed the frowns of the Prince: I told him not of my love for another—he does not even ſuſpect us. He ſeemed ſo fully prepoſſeſſed with the idea that I could not behold him with indifference, that I found it not poſſible to undeceive him.—No, believe me, all is yet ſafe."

"Would I could think ſo!" returned Alzendorf, mournfully.

Joſephine repeated to him all that had paſſed in her late interview with the Prince. He liſtened to her with attention; and after ſhe had concluded, continued ſome time muſing. At length he replied.

"Ah, Joſephine! it is uſeleſs to deceive ourſelves!

ourſelves! The Prince, no doubt, ſuſpected ſomething when he came to reflect on your behaviour; and it was to impart theſe doubts he ſought the Counteſs, who will with rapture confirm his worſt fears. Joſephine, I repeat it again, we can find ſafety only in flight."

"And is it certain we ſhall find it there?" aſked the apprehenſive girl. "How ſhall we poor fugitives in a foreign land—how ſhall we find protection and ſuccour from enemies powerful as our's?"

"Any nation, any country would yield us a refuge; but we will not aſk it of man. We will fly to Switzerland—amid its wild ſolitary mountains we will ſeek a retreat; on the lone bank of ſome lake we will find an hut—we will be the world to each other! Love ſhall be our's; we ſhall be moſt happy; our hearts ſhall own no ſorrow but ſeparation,

and we will never be ſeparated. Often as we wander amid the welcome ſhades of thoſe woods which ſhut us from the world, we will think with compaſſion on the poor wretches who ſeek for happineſs in it."

Thus did he continue to picture to himſelf the paradiſe of his imagination—charming dream! that could for a moment ſooth even the dejected hopeleſs Joſephine; but ſoon ſhe rouſed herſelf from its deluſion. She exclaimed, in an emphatic voice—

"Tempt me no more, Alzendorf! Have I not a father—a kind, a tender father?"

"True," returned he, "you have a kind, a tender father; therefore would he make a ſacrifice of you? No, he loves you. But he is powerleſs—he can do nothing but ſay with me, 'Fly—it is your only ſafety!'"

"Talk to me no more," ſaid ſhe, troubled. "I am ſure it is not proper; at leaſt

I ought

I ought to acquaint my father—I ought to have his fanction."

"Oh! how unwillingly do I ftill urge you againft your judgment! But why acquaint your father? Why involve him in our misfortunes? He at leaft fhould be fpared. Oh Jofephine, my beloved Jofephine, there is no time to be loft in deliberation! Perhaps to-morrow will be too late!"

She replied not.

"Jofephine," he continued, in a fubdued voice, "you have deceived yourfelf and me! You do not love me, or why cruelly hefitate in this awful juncture, when all depends on our promptnefs and decifion? Speak, Jofephine, fpeak!"

"Oh Alzendorf! how can you call upon me to form a determination of fo much importance fo fuddenly, without giving it one ferious reflection? To leave my poor father!

father!—to ſuffer him to believe I am ungrateful!—I cannot do it!" and ſhe burſt into tears.

Alzendorf, ſhocked at having been the cauſe of them, endeavoured to ſooth her to compoſure.

"I will not," he cried, "ſtrive to wreſt from you your conſent. No, your heart muſt agree, I reverence your delicacy, whilſt I tremble for its effects; but I will no more urge you—you may at length yield a willing aſſent."

"I will promiſe to fly with you to Switzerland, if they force me to extremities. The fault will then be their's, and my heart can never reproach me."

This was the promiſe he at laſt extracted from her; and with this half aſſent to his wiſhes, he was forced to be content. She agreed to meet him on the following evening, though

though his heart heavily foreboded this arrangement would be uſeleſs. But Joſephine, not poſſeſſing his fears, or at leaſt flattering herſelf the evil was yet far diſtant, ſaid every-thing to comfort the afflicted Alzendorf; for nothing but quitting the parental roof appeared too great a ſacrifice, to enſure the peace of one ſo beloved; but from that her heart recoiled, when ſhe thought on her father. She determined ſhe would never put it in practice, but at the direſt extremity; and to ſuch an extremity ſhe hoped never to be reduced. She had ſcarcely entered the houſe when ſhe was ſummoned to attend her father.

"Joſephine, my love," ſaid he, "I have juſt received an order from Court; and as my period of attendance commences to-morrow, I am deſired to repair thither, and as a farther indulgence, am permitted to take with me

my

my houſehold. I have no great difficulty in imputing this favour to the converſation you had with the Prince; but yet, my Joſephine, the Duke muſt be obeyed."

Surpriſed and terrified, ſhe now believed her ruin inevitable. All the ſad forebodings of Altendorf were in her idea verified.

"Oh my father!" ſhe at length exclaimed, "is there no way to eſcape theſe terrible trials I am about to undergo? I ſhall be entirely at their diſpoſal; for who will there dare to take my part?"

"My Joſephine, you will ſtill be under the protection of a father."

"Oh my good father!" cried ſhe, throwing herſelf into his arms, "I ſhall then be ſafe! Take me with you; I have now no fears."

The Baron, rejoiced to ſee her compoſed, ordered preparations for their early departure

on

on the morrow.—It was with infinite dismay Josephine found herself in the apartments of her father, at the Palace of S——; knowing from that moment she was cut off from all communication with Alzendorf. She could not but reflect on the alarm her sudden removal would occasion him, and how he would blame her obstinate refusal, to fly with him from their power; but she did not reproach herself, for she still had the protection of her father.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

"Vengeance is still alive.—From her dark covert, with all her snakes erect upon her crest, she [illegible] view."

YOUNG.

As Ludoff had foreseen, Countess Wolina, in compliance with the will of the Duke, had become more circumspect in her behaviour towards Alzendorf; yet she could not but observe, on his part too, a visible alteration. She could not but perceive, as assiduously as she sought a secret opportunity of conversing with him, as assiduously did he shun it;

it; nor was ſhe long in developing the cauſe. The emiſſaries ſhe employed, ſoon brought intelligence of his evening interviews with Joſephine; his diſguſt, his coldneſs had now a too evident cauſe. In ſpite of all her arts, an explanation had then taken place! How overwhelming was this aſſurance!—ſtill ſhe would not even yet deſpair; her rival was, perhaps, yet within her power.

She revolved every poſſible ſcheme. The reſult of her reflections was, to make known to the Prince himſelf as much of the affair as ſhe believed would befriend her purpoſe—to urge him to quicken his purſuit, and immediately to have Joſephine placed in a ſituation removed from Alzendorf's knowledge, or at leaſt to refuſe him all acceſs to her; as ſhe by no means poſſeſſed that romantic idea of the Prince's honour which Alzendorf entertained. Indeed ſhe well knew that, where

deeply

deeply interested, he hardly scrupled by what means his wishes were accomplished. She had likewise another motive in the recital: she feared he might gain this intelligence through other channels; and the account not receiving the softenings she intended to bestow on it, he might (believing Josephine's affections engaged) conceive a disgust to the affair, entirely destructive of her plans.

She had no sooner formed the idea, than she dispatched a billet to the Prince, requesting his immediate presence; —she likewise determined to prevent Alzendorf's evening's meeting, fearing he might anticipate her projects, as an immediate flight might destroy them all together. It was the least of her intention that Alzendorf should encounter the Prince at her house, knowing it might give him an hint of their proceedings; but as the

the time ſhe appointed to ſee the Prince, was unfortunately that in which he was engaged at Baron Loſenſtein's, he did not make his appearance till ſome time after Alzendorf's arrival, whom ſhe could no longer detain; nor had ſhe longer the wiſh.

When left alone with the Prince, ſhe immediately entered into the detail; ſoftening it as ſhe had pre-reſolved— that is, ſhe ſpoke little of Joſephine's attachment to Alzendorf, dwelling only on *his* paſſion. The Counteſs was particularly guarded in her narrative; ſhe mentioned not their long attachment to each other; he was not to learn they had been ſeparated by the deepeſt, the moſt atrocious, the moſt cruel arts, fearing it might awaken in his boſom ſentiments of humanity and juſtice, which ſhe knew muſt have little to do in this affair.

Notwithſtanding every palliation of the

Counteſs's,

Countefs's, the fhock was indeed great; for he had never the leaft doubted but Jofephine was fincerely attached to him. This falfe fuppofition, as it proved, had in truth greatly contributed to render his paffion fo violent. Was it poffible that he, who had always beheld himfelf the object of univerfal admiration—was it poffible that, where he had condefcended to pay fo much attention, he had not made his accuftomed impreffion? His pride, equally with his love, was now called on, and with readinefs did he feize on the plan the Countefs held out to him; and it was agreed that Jofephine fhould be removed on the following morning to the Palace. The Countefs did not fail to fpeak of Jofephine with enthufiaftic praife; fhe fpoke of her gentle and impreffive manners—of her voice, whofe tones touched the heart—but, above all, her fenfibility.

"It is from this excess of feeling," said she, "I am sure Alzendorf obtains all his influence. It is in painting his sufferings, his agony, his affliction—it is by these means he has obtained his ascendency over her; for I am certain he does not in the least degree possess her affection. Josephine is not a coquette: reflect on her behaviour towards you, and you will feel the truth of what I assure you. Alzendorf does not possess in reality her heart."

Though the Countess so strongly made this declaration, it is possible the Prince did not implicitly believe her; but he was pleased to deceive himself, or at least to persuade the Countess he was so. They at length separated, the Prince no longer despairing; but assured that his presence and assiduity would soon eradicate any preference Josephine might entertain for another, even were that

that a fact, which, aſſiſted by the aſſurance of Counteſs Wolina, he was inclined to doubt; indeed, he had been heretofore ſo uniformly ſucceſsful, that the oppoſition he now encountered, gave but freſh ardour to the purſuit.

CHAP. XI.

"Oh love!
"What magic's thine, that melts the hardeſt heart,
"That fools the wiſeſt mind!"

LANSDOWN.

THE Prince was the firſt perſon that preſented himſelf to pay his compliments to Joſephine on her arrival. He hinted that his ſolicitude was great to behold her treated with every reſpect; and his brother had ſignified his deſire that ſhe would re[illegible] with her father.—Joſephine, deteſt[illegible] hypocriſy, replied coldly to all h[illegible]

He was viſibly hurt by a behaviour ſo little flattering, and ſoon quitted her.

Once more left to reflection, ſhe could not but perceive the dangerous ſituation ſhe was in. She ſaw, indeed, how completely ſhe was in his power, and how fearful might be the conſequence, were ſhe too much to exaſperate him; not for herſelf ſhe feared, but for Alzendorf:—on him the Prince might wreak his vengeance, as he was now, ſhe imagined, certainly poſſeſſed of the ſecret of their love. Filled with theſe fears, ſhe dreaded the impetuoſity of her lover, which might lead him to endeavour to ſee her even in her preſent ſituation.

She had hardly formed the ſuggeſtion, when, on looking up, ſhe beheld him converſing with one of the porters at the door leading to her apartments; and by his angry and earneſt geſture, ſhe ſuppoſed he was demanding admittance.

He often raiſed his eyes to the windows, hoping, no doubt, to catch a glance of her; but ſhe, perceiving his intention, hid herſelf from his view, fearing, if he beheld her, he would immediately ſeek her, unmindful of every impediment that might be oppoſed to him. She watched him as he wrote with a pencil ſome lines, which the man received, when he haſtily retired, and paſſed out of the court-yard. She trembled at his temerity, not doubting but that the billet would be conveyed to the Prince. Already gueſſing the contents, ſhe feared the effect it might have on him; but ſhe was happily relieved from theſe fears, when in a few moments ſhe heard a gentle tap at the door, and the ſame man, entering, laid the note on the table, without uttering a ſyllable. The note contained but a few lines, but the purport, which was as follows, agitated her.

"My Josephine, it is useless to conceal from you that you are a prisoner. Your friends are denied admittance to you. Are you not now reduced to extremities? Do you still hesitate to fly?—Give me but this blessed assurance, and every thing shall be rendered easy."

"No, Alzendorf," she thought, "I am not yet reduced to extremities: my father has said he can protect me. I cannot yet consent."

She determined to write him a note expressive of this determination, and seek an opportunity of conveying it to the man who had been the bearer of his. She knew not how to address him—how to give him a refusal, yet in terms that would soften his

 disappointment,

diſappointment, and aſſure him it ſprang not from want of affection.

" Alzendorf," ſaid ſhe, " I will be your's! No power can make me another's! I will make every effort. We have relied on the compaſſion of the Prince; he has deceived us. His paſſions, perhaps, have deſtroyed his ſenſe of right; but to the Duke we have not appealed. His juſtice has nothing to obſtruct it; he will have no paſſions to blind him; he will ſee the cruelty of tearing thoſe hearts aſunder, whom love has joined. But if theſe laſt efforts ſhould fail, I will then give you the aſſurance you ſo earneſtly require."

She haſtily ſealed it, waiting with eagerneſs an opportunity of delivering it, which ſhe

ſhe ſoon procured, for the man evidently loitered in the way. She knew this refuſal would ſubject her to the anger of her lover; but in every inſtance, ſhe determined to act up to what ſhe conſidered as her duty. Actuated by the hopes ſhe entertained of influencing the Duke, this much-deſired interview ſhe wiſhed to take place immediately; but as it did not exactly agree with the plan of Counteſs Wolina, the requeſt was delayed from day to day. Thus baffled, ſhe was half tempted to believe herſelf reduced to that ſituation, when to fly would be no crime; but when ſhe looked on her father, and remembered ſhe was ſtill under his protection —"Ah no," ſhe exclaimed, "as yet I am ſafe!"

During this time, daily, almoſt hourly ſhe ſaw Alzendorf. Continually he was before her window—continually he had notes

conveyed to her, urging her to flight.—It was this temerity in him made her treat his rival with so much the more gentleness; fearful if, by her harshness of conduct, she irritated him, he might make Alzendorf the sacrifice. She saw him continually in her dreams, and even in her waking reveries, dragged to a prison; and perhaps for some pretended State offence, become immured for life in some miserable dungeon, the victim of his love. With these ideas ever present to her imagination, she dared not assert her usual courage in the presence of the Prince, who now began to think he had at length gained his point; indeed the flattery of self-love had always whispered to him his wonted success.

The agitated Alzendorf could not long remain a calm spectator. His bosom was the seat of every fierce passion despairing love could

could generate, not even unmixed with jealoufy. He had watched her often when in public, whilft converfing with the Prince, and he had marked no figns of anger or contempt; and often when fhe had feen him approach her, fhe had immediately withdrawn. In her laft note fhe had requefted him to write no more. His calmnefs was now difturbed, and he refolved to take a decided part. If, as fhe faid, an audience were denied her, he would himfelf demand one—himfelf make known his wrongs, and claim redrefs.

No fooner had he formed this refolution, than it was put in practice, and he was ufhered into the prefence of the Duke. Nothing difmayed, he addreffed him in a [illegible] manner, recapitulating his ftory, and fuppreffing thofe parts only in which the Countefs had acted a part. He reprefented to

the Duke how unjuſtly they had been ſeparated. As he proceeded, he grew more animated; and in his concluding words, his warmth entirely got the better of his prudence, and he dared to ſay—

"By arts ſhe has been drawn from the protection of her home, and here—even here, ſhe is now detained a priſoner!"

The Duke had heard him patiently to the concluſion. He now roſe up in anger.

"Young man," ſaid he, "I have borne with you thus far. I believed you might in ſome affair have been aggrieved. I would have done all things in my power to have rendered you juſtice. I did not imagine you would have ſought my preſence, to give vent to the bitterneſs of a ſlighted paſſion. Whatever might have been the youthful attachments of Mademoiſelle Loſenſtein, I do not take upon myſelf to decide; but as ſhe

ſhe now is, with her own conſent, my approbation, and that of her father, the affianced wife of my brother, for the future remember to ſpeak of her with more diſtance and reſpect!"—Saying which, he retired.

The haughty and contemptuous manner of the Duke, if poſſible added to the furious paſſions that raged in the boſom of Alzendorf. He determined inſtantly to learn his fate from the lips of Joſephine herſelf. He hurried through the Palace, repeating at each moment—"and with her own conſent!"

He had now gained the gallery that immediately led to her apartments, when, at the farther end, he beheld her croſſing, led by the Prince. The ſight rent every fibre of his frame; he ſprang forward with inconceivable rapidity, and throwing himſelf before her, exclaimed—

"Speak

"Speak to me, Joſephine—ſpeak to me yourſelf, and let your own cruel words cut me from hope at once!"

She caſt but one look at her diſtracted lover, and ſunk into inſenſibility. Alzendorf received her in his arms as ſhe fell, preſſing her lifeleſs form with agony to his boſom.

This was not a ſcene to be beheld unmoved by Prince Albert; in his turn he became agitated by paſſions the moſt violent.

"Maniac!" he exclaimed, "what is it you have done? You have deſtroyed her! you have deſtroyed my Joſephine!"—at the ſame time endeavouring to releaſe her from his frenzied graſp.

"Your Joſephine!—your Joſephine! Have then ſacred vows united you? Have you promiſed, in the ſight of Heaven, to love each other for ever?—Ah no! theſe vows,

theſe

ſhe proteſtations are mine! God of Heaven! is ſhe not mine—mine in thy ſight?"

And with almoſt more than human force, he reſiſted the efforts of the Prince to tear her from him, as he carried her into the apartment where her father was ſitting.

"She is murdered!" cried he, pointing to the Prince as he entered; "he it is who has murdered her."

How inexplicable was this ſcene of horror to the aſtoniſhed Baron! His firſt care was to gain aſſiſtance for his daughter; but the exceſſive rage of the Prince obliged him to turn his attention towards him. Catching his hand—

"My Lord," cried he, "do not notice the ravings of a madman; think of the ſituation of my daughter!"

Alzendorf had thrown himſelf beſide her on the ſofa, where he had placed her. In a

few

few moments, beholding her yet ſenſeleſs, his paſſions were ſtilled; ſofter feelings were awakened, and his tears wetted her cold cheek. Aſſiſtance was ſoon ſummoned, and he himſelf placed her in the arms of her attendants, watching, as if fearful his rival ſhould approach her, gazing on the door till it cloſed; and again he gave himſelf up to gloomy deſpondency. Looking wildly and ſternly around him, he preſſed his hands to his forehead, and ſlowly withdrew.

The wondering Baron turned to aſk an explanation of the Prince, who, with vows of determined revenge, recounted to him the ſcene that had juſt paſſed in the gallery. Though this elucidated little, the Baron thought he had heard enough to know Alzendorf was a lover, and, as he believed, a rejected lover of his daughter's; and in that belief he pitied him,

him, and endeavoured to mollify the anger of the Prince.

"Is it generous," ſaid he, "to cruſh the unfortunate? Sorrow has, you ſee, already deprived him of reaſon; and what ſeverer puniſhment would you inflict? His conduct was, no doubt, bold and preſumptuous; but had it not its ſource in love? Do you not love?"—He pauſed, and ſeeing the Prince apparently more calm, reſumed—"Surely your Highneſs muſt forgive his irritable feelings, on beholding you in the happy poſſeſſion of thoſe affections, of which he ſees himſelf for ever bereft."

"Would I could likewiſe think," ſighed the Prince, "that this Alzendorf has no place in her heart!"

"That he has not, I can declare with certainty," returned the Baron; "for had there not been an unhappy termination to the affair,

affair, why not have declared to me his love?—Count Azendorf is a man whom no father would reject; for then how little did I dare to look up to your Highneſs? On the contrary, he never viſited at my houſe —never ſolicited my friendſhip. No, I am convinced he was ſecretly refuſed by my daughter, and he now believes it proceeded from a predilection for your Highneſs. It is to this only we can impute his conduct, ſo devoid of reaſon."

The Prince thought this ſuppoſition of the Baron founded on probability; for he could ſee no poſſible reaſon why the Count ſhould not diſcloſe himſelf, had he not been certain of being rejected by Joſephine: and he began to flatter himſelf it was one of thoſe ſcenes, of which the Counteſs had forewarned him. He preſſed the hand of the Baron, and promiſed that, for his ſake, he

would

would pardon, and forget the paſt.—"But tell him," continued he, as he quitted the apartment, "that I will receive no ſecond inſult."

Though the Baron had ſo ſtrongly affirmed to the Prince his belief of his daughter's affections being diſengaged; yet, left to ſerious reflection, and ſtruck by a combination of circumſtances, he began to fear there was a more inſurmountable bar to the accompliſhment of their wiſhes, than he had yet dreamed of. For the ſtrange conduct of his daughter, and for a reluctance he had hitherto thought ſo unaccountable, a motive was now revealed; but as in every action of his life, wavering and undecided, he could not determine what courſe to purſue. Loving his daughter with too much fondneſs to force her inclination, yet too much dazzled with the proſpects opening on him, to deſtroy them of his own accord, all he therefore could decide

decide on, was to continue the Prince in ignorance, and to use all the influence he possessed over Josephine, to receive him persuading her that her attachment for Alzendorf (if she really experienced any), was but a childish effervescence. To Alzendorf he resolved to write, forbidding him any further intercourse with his daughter, and threatening him with the vengeance of the Prince.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

> "Oh! ſee how round yon branching elm, the ivy
> "Twines its green chain, and poiſons what ſupports it!
> "Not leſs injurious to the blooming ſhoots
> "Of growing love, is ſickly jealouſy."
>
> MASON.

JOSEPHINE had recovered her indiſpoſition, yet her mind was racked with a thouſand agonizing reflections. She had received a letter from Al[illegible]ndorf, which, though it had aſſured her he had quitted the Palace unmoleſted, yet ſhe could not but believe his danger

danger was no leſs certain, thinking it was not in a nature ſo vindictive as the Prince's to forgive ſo groſs an inſult. Her inſenſibility had happily deprived her of the knowledge of part of his conduct; yet from what ſhe had witneſſed, and the tenor of his note ſhe had juſt received, ſhe dreaded to what lengths he might have proceeded. This note ſhe read, and re-read with increaſed emotion; it was as follows—

"My Joſephine, will you longer heſitate to fly with me? You are now reduced to the laſt extremity! for remember, Joſephine, you cannot fly from the ſteps of the altar!—The way is eaſy—no danger oppoſes us; Ludoff is alone in the ſecret—nothing is wanting but reſolution! and

and love, my Josephine, will give you resolution—and you love me still!—I was convinced they had belied you the moment you cast on me that look—that look which is never to be forgotten! I knew it—I felt it as I pressed you to my bosom—to my beating heart!"

"Yes," cried she, as she once more concluded it, "yes, Alzendorf, I can no longer hesitate—I will leave my father!"

Yet this determination was not attained till after powerful struggles, nor did it convey joy to her heart. No, it was formed only by absolute necessity; she saw the danger of a longer delay to herself, equally with her lover: for the Prince would become undoubtedly more importunate from his fears of a rival. She now therefore saw herself in

in the ſituation of that promiſe, from which ſhe would not recede. Haſtily ſnatching a pen, ſhe wrote—" Alzendorf, I conſent!"

This billet ſhe determined to ſecrete till the following morning, when ſhe could deliver it into the hands of their faithful meſſenger. Having made theſe arrangements, ſhe endeavoured to compoſe her mind, by reflecting that the ſtep ſhe was about to take, was not a voluntary indiſcretion on her part, but forced on her by the conduct of others; but this ſophiſtry could not calm her agitated ſpirits. She attempted not to retire to reſt, but continued walking in her antichamber; ſhe approached the window, and looked on the wide extended gardens of the Palace.—How calm, how beautiful was the ſcene! The moon ſhed her ſoft beams clear as on the night when ſhe firſt liſtened to the vows of love.

"Alzendorf," ſaid ſhe, "did you not then ſay we will love each other?—and, filled with that dear idea, ſhall we ever be unhappy? Ah, we ſtill love each other! yet are we happy?"

The tears that filled her eyes, denied it on her part; and, turning from the window, ſhe continued to walk the chamber in ſorrowful rumination. Suddenly ſhe ſtopped; ſhe thought ſhe heard quick ſteps advancing along the gallery. A ſtrange fear ruſhed on her mind. Who could at that hour ſeek her apartments?—The next moment the door was ſlowly uncloſed, and Alzendorf appeared before her. Shocked, alarmed, trembling with terror—"Alzendorf," ſhe exclaimed, "why are you here? Leave me, leave me inſtantly!"

"Joſephine," ſaid he, in a ſolemn voice, "you muſt hear me—by Heaven, you muſt!"

"Not now—I cannot liſten to you now," rejoined ſhe in yet more terror, as ſhe contemplated the danger to which he expoſed himſelf—"I muſt not, will not liſten to you!"

But it was in vain ſhe entreated him to depart. He would then be heard; but at length, obſerving her exceſſive diſpleaſure, he exclaimed—

"It is then true what I would not believe—you had the cruelty to dictate the letter! Ah, no doubt! tears of pity enhanced the ſacrifice in the eyes of the Prince."

Joſephine could learn nothing from theſe wild expreſſions; it only poſſeſſed her more ſtrongly with the idea, which ſhe before had formed from his language and appearance, that he was diſordered with wine; and it made her ſtill more anxiouſly entreat his abſence.

"I will

" I will go, Jofephine ; for I want no further proof! Have I not already enough to deftroy me?"—He paufed—his feelings feemed to overcome him.

Jofephine afked no explanation from him: alive only to the danger of his fituation, fhe thought in agony of the confequence of a difcovery. She therefore approached him, and, in a voice of gentle kindnefs, reprefented to him to how much he expofed not only himfelf, but her. She named the Prince.

" Ah!" interrupted Alzendorf, as if he had heard only that name, " your father's letter was filled with the Prince: you need not difguife it from me—I know how it is. You fear to excite his jealoufy! Happy, happy Albert! well may he fmile; but in my prefence he fhall learn to conceal his triumph!"—And there appeared a ftrange diftraction in his air as he fpoke.

She liſtened with compaſſion, not unmixed with terror, to language ſhe was utterly at a loſs to comprehend; and endeavoured, with the tendereſt ſolicitude, to calm and awaken him to reaſon. She conjured him, by the moſt powerful motives, by all he valued, by his love, by his regard to her peace and honour, to conquer the impetuous tranſports that agitated him; and again reminded him to what his imprudence might expoſe him from the Prince's vengeance.

"What!" exclaimed he, "and muſt I flyfrom him—fear his revenge?—His revenge—Father of mercies!—for depriving me of all thou haſt given me!—Yet though you have forſaken and abandoned me, Joſephine, I will not reproach you!"

Joſephine had ſtruggled long to ſubdue her feelings, and retain an appearance of diſpleaſure, as the only means to oblige him to retire;

retire; but they were no longer to be reſtrained. The mingled emotion of love, pity, and terror overcame her, and ſhe burſt into tears. They ſeemed to act as a taliſman on the almoſt frenzied ſenſes of Alzendorf; they ſeemed to recall his faſt deſerting reaſon. His eyes loſt their wildneſs, and beamed with impaſſioned tenderneſs upon her, as he regarded her ſome moments with earneſtneſs. At length he exclaimed with vehemence—

"I cannot look on you, and doubt! No, Joſephine, tenderly beloved Joſephine, I doubt no longer."

The ſudden tranſition but added to her emotion, and ſhe wept with redoubled violence;—each tear fell on his boſom as a reproach, and, ſinking on his knees before her, he continued, but his voice was ſunk in a tone of deſponding grief—

 "Forſake,

"Forſake, abandon me, Joſephine, or you deſtroy your peace, your happineſs for ever!—No, my breaſt, convulſed by every paſſion, is not a fit abode for your affections. I love you above all created beings, yet this love—this ardent love is your greateſt misfortune;—it is not my ſenſeleſs conduct that has made you ſuffer, that has even now cauſed thoſe tears to flow. Oh Joſephine! forſake, abandon me!"

Tears ſpoke his repentance. Touched, ſoftened, ſurpriſed—

"Alzendorf," ſaid ſhe, "I know no affliction but when I ſee you unhappy."

"Angel of light, you forgive me; but never can I forgive myſelf!"

He continued to reproach himſelf; and all the tenderneſs of Joſephine ſerved but as the heavieſt upbraidings.

"Never will I," continued he, "never will

will I permit my heart to form one doubt of truth ſo tried!—no, thy laſt dear forgiveneſs ſhall be my ſurety for ever."

"Here was yet a ſtronger pledge," cried Joſephine, holding to him the letter ſhe purpoſed ſending in the morning—"there is the pledge ſo long required."

"Ah, this letter!" cried he, and his eyes beamed with yet brighter joy; "am I ſtill to be deſtroyed with a ſenſe of my own unworthineſs? When ſhall I learn to command my heart? When ſhall I learn to ſlight it's wild impulſes? Every phantom of my brain works on my feelings till it appears reality. That letter which your father wrote to me a few hours ſince, when I firſt received it, I, no doubt, beheld it in its proper light; but ſoon my heart would not permit me to look on it thus calmly. It perſuaded me it was not only known to you,

 but

but perhaps dictated by you, and it was thus you chose to effect my dismissal. In vain I represented to myself the reasonableness of my first conjecture. I was now fully possessed with this idea, and it worked me up to a state of wretchedness hardly to be conceived. I had, soon after quitting the Palace, written to you a billet, in the fullest persuasion of your love; I had conveyed it to the hands of my messenger, some time before I had received the Baron's letter. Your answer I determined to make the solution of the dreadful fears that oppressed me; and, believe me, I had acquired some mastery over my feelings, thus long to deprive myself of conviction. Oh, with what indescribable agony did I feel each moment depart! No answer came, though I had made the messenger promise he would deliver it immediately.

The approach of night bereft me of

every

every remaining hope, except in the negligence of the man in delivering it. I flew inſtantly to the Palace, as if impatient to gratify my deſpair; for hope I had none. I had the prudence to wrap my great coat around me, to prevent my immediately being known. I knocked low at the door, where he always attended. He ſoon appeared, and, making a ſign, inſtantly led me into a ſmall chamber, unperceived by any one. Having eagerly demanded of him if he had yet delivered my note, I had the bitter intelligence to learn that it had been given to you ſome hours before. As the man gave me the information, a ſtrange ſenſation ſeized me: I felt as if life was faſt receding from me—I believed and hoped it was. The young man ſaw how much I was affected, and gave me ſome wine, of which I drank eagerly. It revived me; but it might add likewiſe to

the fire in my veins; and, half frenzied as I was, I formed the resolution of seeing you this night. I asked him to aid me, by permitting me to remain in his chamber till the hour I believed safe to see you, and likewise his assistance in quitting the Palace at any time I chose. I had bound him too fast my friend, for him to form any objection, let the adventure be ever so hazardous. He learned when your attendants quitted you, and it is by these means you see me here. Ah, my Josephine! does not this detail of my ungoverned passion alarm you? Do you not repent this dear acquiescence?"—and he pressed the paper which he still held, to his lips.

"No, Alzendorf," said Josephine, "nor shall I ever. The reign of passion is but short in a mind like your's."

A thousand acknowledgments were poured forth

forth from the full heart of her lover; and it was long ere he was ſufficiently collected to tell her the intended plan of their eſcape.

"It will be eaſy," ſaid he, "to leave the Palace, as I am aſſured of the aſſiſtance of the man by whoſe means I gained admittance to-night. We will then go to my friend Ludoff, where we ſhall find every thing provided for our flight; and a few hours will convey us out of the Duke's dominions. At Ludoff's, a Prieſt ſhall attend us; but if that is thought too long to retard us, he ſhall be the companion of our flight, and unite us at the firſt place we arrive at, freed from ſubjection to the Duke."

Joſephine preferred the latter plan, as ſhe dreaded the leaſt delay.

"But how ſhall we eſcape the ſentinels?"

 "Our

"Our friendly porter, I make no doubt, will form a plan to elude them; or at leaſt we can bribe them beyond all fear of being betrayed. Or I was thinking," continued he, "your windows being ſo low, you might make your eſcape that way, which would do a way all danger of evading the ſentinels."

Joſephine liſtened to theſe arrangements with a ſort of trembling fear, not being able to reconcile herſelf entirely to the ſtep ſhe was about to take; yet looking upon it as inevitable, ſhe advanced to the windows, to judge if it would be practicable. It was perfectly ſo; a terrace walk juſt beneath, rendered the diſtance from the ground but trifling. She looked out for ſome moments. Alzendorf ſtood by her ſide.

"Ah, Joſephine!" cried he, in a voice of tenderneſs, embracing her, "when that moon ariſes over our cottage——"

And almoſt for the firſt time ſince ſhe had agreed to eſcape, a ſentiment of unmixed delight thrilled her heart.

"I ſhall then be the wife of Alzendorf," thought ſhe; and ſhe looked upon him with love unutterable.

"Oh my Joſephine! now my own Joſephine!" returned the enraptured Alzendorf, "that look is dearer to me than even your compliance, as it aſſures me it is a compliance from the heart. Can a whole life dedicated to you, ever make a return for this one act of heroic love?—Oh no! I ſhall ſtill pay, and ſtill be a debtor."

He was yet ſpeaking, when they were alarmed by the ſound of ſome one at the door. To the affrighted fancy of Joſephine, it could be no other than the Prince. Alzendorf repreſented to her the weakneſs of

her fears, and wifhed to remove them by going to the door; but fhe held him with almoft wild terror. The fignal was repeated in a few feconds.

"It is the porter," faid Alzendorf; and gently loofing himfelf from her hold, he found his furmifes were juft;—it was no other than Peter, who came to remind him he muft now quit the Palace, or he would not anfwer for his paffing undifcovered. Alzendorf promifed to follow him in a few moments.

"Jofephine," faid he, "I muft now leave you; but it is with the fweeteft affurance that in a few hours you will be mine—mine beyond the power of earthly means to divide us. I muft begone," repeated he, throwing his arm around her; "be prepared; do not let your fpirits fail you in the moment

moment of trial; to the care of Providence I commend you. Oh my Josephine—my wife!" and he tore himself away.

The solemnity of his parting words gave a mournful tone to his feelings for some moments after his departure; but he had called her *his Josephine*, *his wife*, and her spirits revived as she recalled the sound. Should she then be the wife of Alzendorf, whom so long she had hopelessly loved, whom so long she had secretly adored? Alzendorf, the first and best of men, to live only for her!—her beloved Alzendorf to be the partaker of her sorrows, the partner of her joys—to look on him, to speak to him for ever, never to be separated, to be able to tell him how much she loved him without restraint, and to let all her actions convince him of it!

"Ah,

"Ah, then I may ſay, without a bluſh, Alzendorf, I love you!" exclaimed ſhe, little foreboding the ills that awaited her.

Theſe ſweet ideas ſoothed her to reſt. The morning awoke her to joy, and it was ſome moments before ſhe thought of the allay that muſt accompany it, in her ſeparation from her father. But it will not be for long, ſhe thought; when they find it inevitable, they will recall and pardon us. At leaſt, with theſe hopes ſhe endeavoured to reconcile herſelf to the parting ſo ſoon to take place.

The Baron ſpoke little to her during the day, and his looks announced that ſomething important was in agitation. Joſephine had little doubt that ſome plan was forming in favour of the Prince. This remark, and her father having for the laſt two or three days declared himſelf

more

more decidedly for the Prince than he had yet done, reconciled her to her intended flight; and what yet more fully confirmed her fears, was her father having that morning been closeted with the Prince. Still as she looked on him, her eyes filled with tears, when she thought how she was destroying his bright hopes. She spoke to Olivia with more than usual affection, reflecting on the separation that was so soon to take place. Had Olivia been the least suspicious, she had perceived there was something particular on her mind. As evening approached, her emotions became more apparent:—at twelve Alzendorf was to be in the gardens of the Palace; the candles being removed, was to be the signal that her attendants had quitted her.—It wanted now but three hours of the appointed time. She was sitting alone with Olivia, with a beating heart; she was marking the

the moments as they fled. She could not but wifh for the hour with the utmoft impatience; for her father's myfterious conduct had impreffed her with a ftrange dread. She thought on what Alzendorf had faid,—"Perhaps to-morrow will be too late; remember there is no efcaping from the fteps of the altar."

Jofephine had watched in vain the rifing of the friendly moon. The night was dark and tempeftuous.

"This is a night," faid Olivia, "that bids one pity the poor wretch expofed to its fury."

This remark did not pafs unfelt by Jofephine.

"And my wifhes are fixed on braving it!" faid fhe, mentally.

As fhe approached the window to obferve the war of elements fhe was about expofing herfelf

herſelf to, ſhe was ſurpriſed at perceiving a carriage at the door, ſurrounded by attendants. Turning to make the obſervation to Olivia, ſhe ſaw her father enter.

"Joſephine," ſaid he, "prepare yourſelf; every thing is arranged; we are going to quit the Palace to-night."

Her ſenſes ſeemed almoſt ſuſpended with the ſuddenneſs of the ſhock; in that moment her whole project was annihilated. Her father had a ſecond time repeated the requeſt; ſtill ſhe moved not, yet ſhe perceived no means of averting the evil: but her father repeating his command in a ſtern voice, ſhe haſtened to obey him, hardly knowing what ſhe did. She would have ſpoken to their friend, the porter, that he might convey the intelligence of her departure to Alzendorf; but ſhe could find no opportunity, as her father hurried her to the carriage. Could

ſhe

ſhe ever believe ſhe could quit the Palace with reluctance—could look back upon its gates with regret?

The idea that gave her the acuteſt pain, was what would be the feelings of Alzendorf, when, having waſted the night in vain expectation to behold her approach the window, and forming a thouſand excuſes for her fancied delay, he ſhould at length find every hope cruſhed.

Till the carriage ſtopped, ſhe had not formed an idea where they might be conveying her. She rejoiced when ſhe perceived her father's houſe; hope began to revive; there was ſtill a poſſibility ſhe might not be betrayed—that it was merely a removal from the Palace. The idea likewiſe, that ſhe was ſeparated ſo ſhort a diſtance from Alzendorf, gave her comfort. She reſolved to unburthen her mind to Olivia, when

when ſhe retired from the preſence of her father. Olivia treated it lightly, perſuading her that Alzendorf would ſoon learn her removal, and their plan could be carried into execution with much greater facility at their preſent abode, than while they remained at the Palace.

On the following day, her father appeared gloomy, reſerved, and occupied as on the preceding. Joſephine could not diſcover whether he was in the poſſeſſion of her ſecret, or what thus deeply engaged him. But this myſtery was ſoon to be fatally explained; as in the evening, accompanied by Olivia, ſhe was traverſing a remote path of the garden, a letter was flung over the fence, and fell at Joſephine's feet. With what diſordered eagerneſs did ſhe unfold a billet in the well-known hand of Alzendorf!—but the contents, ſo much more cruel than ſhe expected, totally

totally overpowered her, and ſhe ſunk, almoſt inſenſible, on the boſom of Olivia, who hurried her to the neareſt ſeat. She ſoon became acquainted with the cauſe of her friend's agitation, in the firſt lines of the following letter.

"Grieve no more, my Joſephine; my impriſonment will not be of long continuance:—it was effected without the knowledge of the Counteſs, and does not meet with her concurrence. She wrote to me this morning, informing me ſhe had exerted her intereſt in my favour, and in three days I ſhould be releaſed. She wrote me this, no doubt to engage my gratitude; but ſhe has ill ſucceeded.

"Does ſhe think I ſaw not through the affected reſtraint of three days?—'Yes,' ſaid I,

I, 'then will Joſephine be torn from me, and then I may be free, and this will engage my gratitude!'—And I was not deceived: a letter from Ludoff explained their whole machination; in three days you are to be removed far diſtant from me, but where Ludoff could not learn.—Oh Joſephine! you are about to be torn from me! It is this thought makes me look with deſperation on my priſon-walls. But I will not afflict you; rather let me ſpeak comfort to you; for am I bereft of it?—No! Conſider, my beloved, what had been our lot, (I impriſoned—helpleſs as I am), if the Prince had dared to become a blacker tyrant than he is, and forced you, reluctant, to the altar! Think, Joſephine, think but of that, horrible, diſtractingly horrible as is the thought!—I accuſtom myſelf to the contemplation of it, that it may reconcile me to what I now ſuffer.

"It

" It was long, my beloved, ere I could reafon thus—it was long ere hope would vifit my fad heart: it is from your banifhment, cruel as that word appears, that I found hope. Ah, my Jofephine! I feel a furety of again beholding you!—They keep a watch upon me for ever!—Ah no! love can elude their vigilance, and in a fhort time I will be with you; and the moments that intervene, my Jofephine, we will not be feparated. No, in thought, in idea, we will ever be united; not an inftant but I will be with you, ftill by your fide, traverfe the deep woods, or wander among the wild and lonely mountains your tyrant forces you to inhabit. God of Heaven!——But I have fworn to be calm.

" Oh Jofephine! I have fhed tears when I reflected it was even to fuch a folitude as this we were about to fly. How did love gild

gild the ſcene! It preſented to us a paradiſe, and it would have been a paradiſe. Its ſolitude, its remoteneſs would only have endeared us to each other. The winds that whiſtled over the mountains—the ſtorms that beat againſt our cottage, would only claſp us cloſer in each other's arms!

"Ah, my beloved friend! though I feel it overpowers me—it unmans me, yet I could write thus for ever; but even this conſolation is denied me. I am warned; the keeper muſt not return, and find theſe implements of writing.

"Joſephine, by the influence I hold in your heart, I conjure you not to lament this ſeparation. Look upon it as that of a few weeks only; and even in that ſpace we will, by ſome means I will deviſe, hear of each other. As I am now about to conclude, my reſolution, my calmneſs almoſt

forſake me. Send me conſolation, Joſephine!—write to me!—Oh, let it be an aſſurance of your love, and let it be a thouſand times repeated. And dare I aſk of you to procure me your picture? Yes, I know the kind Olivia will not withhold it from me, when ſhe learns it will ſoften the ſorrows of ſeparation, and be a balm to the wounded heart.

"Joſephine! adorable Joſephine! let it be preſſed to your lips, and it ſhall become a thouſand times dearer to me!—Write to me of hope—of love; ſend me every thing that can ſpeak of your affection, and they ſhall be the companions of my days of ſorrow—they ſhall comfort me!

"The moments fly, and I ſtill continue to write—ſtill does my heart refuſe to ſay farewell; but it muſt bid adieu. My beloved Joſephine, adieu!"

Josephine had read the first line—had learned Alzendorf was a prisoner! She perceived no more. The characters, indistinct and imperfect, swam before her sight, and it was the support of Olivia alone that kept her from falling.

A long time elapsed ere she was enough recovered, to learn the intended short duration of his confinement; but that he was at that moment a prisoner, so entirely engrossed her, that Olivia could not in the least interest her in the mention Alzendorf had made of her banishment, till at length the thought that she had alike involved her father and lover in misfortune, overcame her.

With an excess of anguish, Olivia endeavoured to console her; but with little effect. She could not believe they would release Alzendorf, or that even he himself had a hope.

 "He

"He writes it only to comfort me," ſaid ſhe.

She was yet weeping, when a meſſage was delivered her from her father. How unfit did ſhe feel herſelf to attend the ſummons!—but, indifferent to every thing, ſhe determined to obey.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Oh, vain to ſeek delight in earthly things!
But moſt in Courts, where proud ambition towers!
Deluded wight! who weens fair peace can ſpring
Beneath the pompous dome of Cæſar or of King!

SHENSTONE.

UNEASY, not perfectly ſatisfied, Prince Albert had, on the evening of Joſephine's projected elopement, quitted a party, to ruminate alone. His ſtill haraſſed imagination would preſent to him the ſcenes of the day. He feared he might be deceived; he doubted the truth of the Baron's aſſertion, he doubted the penetration of the Counteſs. How inſupportably painful was the idea of a rival

to his proud heart! He who believed himſelf almoſt ſuperior to the reſt of mankind—he to whom conqueſts had been ſo eaſy—it was but to ſee, to ſpeak, and he ſoftened the moſt obdurate hearts! And could Joſephine, the only one he had ever thought of honouring with his hand, could ſhe behold him with indifference? No, he believed it impoſſible; but the ſimple idea had rendered him angry and reſtleſs, and with the intention of tranquillizing his ſpirits, he rambled into the gardens, to which his apartment opened.

Inſtinctively he turned to the terrace beneath the window of Joſephine's apartments. He had not long remained ſtationary, when he heard voices; and he almoſt believed, by the little he could diſtinguiſh of the tones, for they ſpoke low, one was that of a man. In a fit of almoſt frenzied rage, he ſprang from the

the terrace among the thickets beneath, determining to try if he could obtain a more diſtinct view of the interior of the apartment. As he again looked, he beheld them approach the window; ſhrouded by thick branches that ſurrounded him, he had an opportunity of regarding them, without fear of being obſerved.

The ſhades of evening almoſt veiled them; yet he ſaw enough to aſſure him it was no other than Joſephine and the hated Alzendorf; and as if his angry and jealous paſſions were not enough by that ſight inflamed, he beheld him in a few moments paſs his arm around her waiſt, and preſs her to his heart!—The ſight was madneſs to him; his blood boiled with rage; he fled from the ſpot, determining on inſtant revenge.

He haſtened to the apartment of his brother, and related to him the ſcene he had

juſt witneſſed. The Duke had not forgot the interview between him and Alzendorf in the morning, nor the language he had then held; he entered, therefore, into the diſpleaſure of the Prince, and immediately ſigned an order for the arreſt of the Count.

As for the conduct to be purſued with Joſephine, the Prince could not bring himſelf readily to determine.

"Alzendorf," ſaid he, "for ever ſhall be ſeparated from her."—And he ordered the arreſt to be put in execution.

What was the ſurpriſe of Alzendorf when, having paſſed quietly, and unqueſtioned by the ſentinels, he ſuddenly found himſelf ſurrounded, and a priſoner! Though without the leaſt hope of an eſcape, he dared to contend; but it was without avail. Exhauſted and almoſt ſenſeleſs, he was conveyed to the ſtate priſon; and he had been ſome time locked

up

up in one of its cells, before he recovered recollection enough to feel his situation, or that which touched him deeper, the triumph of his rival. This idea almost again annihilated his scarce returning senses.

Let the imprecations he that night poured on the head of his enemies, be forgiven him; he loved, and he believed this object so beloved, in his possession, and found her torn from him, and he knew not but that it was an eternal separation. In these gloomy meditations, the long hours passed on; each moment brought fresh agonies, as he reflected that each moment brought him nearer that period, which was to have given him Josephine.

The feelings of the Prince were almost less to be envied, as he gloomily paced his chamber in deep meditation, unable to decide the fate of Josephine. One moment

he thought he would again offer his hand—the next he abhorred himſelf for the idea; one moment the world ſhould be made acquainted with his wrongs—in the next he bluſhed even to acknowledge them to himſelf. Thus, torn with contending emotions, he could determine on nothing.

After a long deliberation, he came to a reſolution of placing her in ſome remote ſolitude, not only removed from the reſt of the world, but from himſelf; for he ſaw this was a moment the moſt unfavourable for the proſecution of his addreſſes: and though he could carefully guard Alzendorf from her, yet he could by no other means ſhut her from the reſt of mankind; and ſo great was his admiration of her, he feared in every one to behold a hidden rival. To remove her, therefore, for ſome little time to ſolitude, appeared to him a plan the moſt deſirable;

he

he hoped likewiſe ſhe would there give a few ſighs for the world ſhe had quitted, and be induced to look on his ſuit with leſs repugnance, as the only means to effect her return to it. But he chiefly reſted his hopes on the diſgrace ſhe would believe ſhe had brought on her father—*baniſhed, and by her means!*—He knew its effects on her affectionate heart; abſence, and the total extinction of hope, he believed would weaken, if not entirely deſtroy, the ſentiments ſhe now entertained for Alzendorf.

This then was his plan, and he immediately communicated it to the Baron. Any ſcheme that would prevail on Joſephine to receive, with leſs reluctance, the addreſſes of the Prince, had the concurrence of the Baron; he even himſelf mentioned the eſtate he poſſeſſed in the K—— mountains, as a proper place for their retreat. The Prince

had his whole heart; he entered, therefore, with avidity into this plan, delighted to find the Prince ſo ready to overlook what he had feared would have made an eternal breach.

The ſcheme was inſtantly to be put in execution. Joſephine and her father quitted the palace that night. No ſooner were they gone, than the Prince regretted his project: he began to think it would have been better, had ſhe remained in the palace, continually under his eye; and he began to tremble at the diſtance that would ſeparate them. It was in vain that reaſon urged the impoſſibility of her now liſtening to him, whom ſhe muſt deteſt, from his recent conduct towards Alzendorf. He endeavoured to rouſe afreſh the rage he had ſo lately felt, by reflecting on the ſcene he had witneſſed; but the firſt ebullition of his anger was gone by:—thoſe fierce paſſions were not to be recalled; he

found

found he ftill loved her, whom he but a fhort time before had believed he fhould ever regard with indifference. Imagination would prefent Jofephine's feelings in occafioning, as fhe believed, her father's banifhment; he faw her fuffering, and fuffering by his means.

"Oh Heavens!" faid he, "why am I neceffitated to appear to her a cruel tyrant? Oh, why am I to become hateful in her eyes, through an excefs of love? Yet can I act otherwife, and refign her to Alzendorf?"

Thus did love revive with all its priftine force. He determined to make a laft effort by writing to the Baron, entreating him once more to ufe the influence he poffeffed over his daughter in his favour, to urge to her his banifhment, to perfuade her it was in her power to fave him from difgrace—that

fhe

ſhe held his fate in her hand.—Thus was he reduced to the weakneſs of ſuing to be accepted, though convinced her heart was another's.

The Baron received the letter with the extremeſt delight, and inſtantly ſent that ſummons which his daughter obeyed, the trace of the recent tear yet on her cheek. The Baron obſerved it.

"Joſephine," ſaid he, "you have then learned my misfortune!—you have learned your father is a baniſhed man!"

"And I have occaſioned it," ſaid ſhe, in a broken voice; "but, my father, do not hate me!" and, burſting again into tears, ſhe endeavoured to throw herſelf on the ground before him; but he prevented her, by catching her in his arms.

She leaned on his boſom, and the

tears

tears that fell on it, feemed to foften his heart.

"My dear, my beloved Jofephine!" he exclaimed, and preffed her clofer in his arms.

Thefe words completely fubdued her, and with half-recovered articulation, fhe faid—

"What is it I can do, my father—how can I fave you?"

At that inftant the Baron placed the Prince's letter in her hand. She read it with firmnefs.

"Yes, my father, I will do it, if you do indeed require this facrifice."

The Baron's countenance, which had brightened with the triumph of fuccefs, now again became clouded, as he liftened to the defponding tone in which the laft words were uttered. He took her hand, and once more recapitulated what he had fo often urged.

"Consider, Josephine," said he, "I do not ask of you to unite yourself with age, or crimes; the Prince is a man to whose perfections you alone seem insensible. And reflect, my Josephine," continued the Baron, "how great will be your power to benefit your fellow-creatures. Yes," said he, "every suffering being shall bless my child."

This picture, flattering as it was to a heart filled with benevolence, did not stop her tears. Again he attempted to rouse her ambition, and talked; till at length, exhausting himself, he looked on his daughter for an answer.

"Yes, my father," she repeated, "I am content."

But her flowing tears, her almost agonized countenance, spoke a fearful acquiescence. This extreme emotion touched the heart of the Baron; he really loved his

daughter

daughter too well for ſuch a forced compliance to be accepted; and he plainly perceived the Prince could hope for nothing but from time.

"No, Joſephine," ſaid he, after ſome meditation, "thoſe tears are not the conſent I wiſh; forget what has juſt paſſed, and to-morrow we ſet forward for the K—— mountains, and in the gloom of St. Ulric you will learn to appreciate what you now contemn."

"What I may experience in the baniſhment, ſhall be ſoftened by the knowledge that I have not rendered you unhappy."

She endeavoured to aſſure him of her compliance with his wiſhes; but ſhe could not give utterance to the words. Her father had ſaid—'In her happineſs he ſhould find his own.'—She believed he ſpoke with ſincerity what he felt, and for his ſake ſhe

determined to controul her emotions, to ſubdue her feelings to a patient acquieſcence to her fate, and endeavour, by every means in her power, to ſoften her father's ſufferings, and conceal her own, at leaſt in his preſence. And it was not till, being alone with Olivia, ſhe gave vent to their violence; it was then ſhe wept Alzendorf's impriſonment—it was then ſhe called upon his name in tones of the wildeſt deſpair!

"Oh, if I could but once ſee him!" ſhe ſaid; "Oh, that I could learn he did not utterly deteſt me!"

Olivia bade her again peruſe the letter ſhe had that morning received. This had in ſome meaſure the effect of calming her perturbed ſpirits; and, reflecting that her father had ſaid they were to quit the chateau the following morning, ſhe determined, therefore, to conſecrate the intervening hours to

Alzendorf.

Alzendorf. As ſhe read his letter, ſhe was ſurpriſed at his calmneſs; ſhe reperuſed it, and perceived the reſtraint it was written under. She felt rejoiced he had exerted ſo much command over himſelf. Vain were her efforts to follow his example; ſhe found it impoſſible to ſtifle her feelings, or write with hope, when ſhe only beheld deſpair.

"You aſk," ſaid ſhe, "for hope, for conſolation:—alas! I feel no hope—I know no conſolation! I can indeed ſend you aſſurances of my love; but it had been happy for you, Alzendorf, if it had never exiſted. It is I, it is my love that has afflicted you. Before I was known to you, you were happy; fortune and the world ſmiled on you, and I have reduced you to a priſon. Oh cruel thoughts! ever preſent, depriving me of peace, almoſt of reaſon! Each moment do I

repeat

repeat to myſelf—' Ah! happier for Alzendorf, had he never known me!'—I would entreat you to forget me; but, alas! my heart refuſes to conſent, and I can only aſk you to love me! It will be all the comfort I ſhall know, for I have little hope that we ſhall ever meet again. But never will I be another's! The love I feel, cannot be extinguiſhed; the grave itſelf will not have power over it; beyond it we ſhall meet again. Ah Alzendorf! it is this thought which fills my heart once more with joy; and I can think and ſmile on their futile attempts to ſeparate us. They forget a greater than they ſhall unite us—and unite us eternally!

"And is this all the conſolation I can ſend you, that we ſhall meet beyond the grave?—Alas, Alzendorf! it is all I have! I

am

am wretched—very wretched! I have banifhed my father—I have placed you in prifon!—Ah, Alzendorf! how much nobler is your love than mine! You conceal your griefs—you attempt to comfort me, whilft I increafe your anguifh in detailing to you my own. It is a cruel weaknefs, but it eafes my heart; pardon me, and I will ceafe.

"I have fent you my picture for your's. Every object that I look on, prefents it—yes, every inftant it is before me.—I fee you traverfe your miferable chamber—I fee you reft for a moment on your hard pallet; but thefe images will not always be before me. You to-morrow will be releafed. Ah, Alzendorf! like you, I feel joy at my banifhment, convinced it is that only would have releafed you.

"I have fent you my picture; and every time you look on it, may it give you a frefh

affurance

aſſurance of my love! Alzendorf, like you, I could write for ever—for ever tell you how much I love you!—Farewell! my dear, beloved friend, farewell!"

The letter was ſo blotted with her tears, that it was hardly legible; yet, when urged by Olivia to write another, as ſhe feared theſe evident proofs of Joſephine's grief would but increaſe the ſufferings of Alzendorf—"Little, Olivia," ſaid ſhe, "do you underſtand the feelings of love; they will not afflict—they will comfort him. He has aſked of me aſſurances of my love; and this letter, ſteeped as it is with the tears of ſeparation, will be a dearer pledge to him than all the proteſtations on earth."

Olivia did not heſitate to reſign to him the

the ſo much-deſired portrait; it had been a gift from Joſephine in their firſt friendſhip. Olivia had determined not to leave her friend, whom ſhe ſo tenderly loved, at a juncture ſo cruel. But Counſellor Weimer, her father, began to perceive a difference in his daughter's reſiding with Baron Loſenſtein high in Court influence, and Baron Loſenſtein retiring to a remote eſtate in the K—— mountains, recalled her home. Thus was Joſephine left to uninterrupted ſolitude.

Joſephine had heard nothing further from Alzendorf, but ſhe had no doubt of his liberation on that day; and the idea that her departure had effected his releaſe, entirely reconciled her to it. But for her father—ſhe knew he had none of theſe conſolations; to him ſhe believed it muſt be a deprivation of all that was valuable in life; and for him only Joſephine wept, when ſhe beheld

the ſpires of S—— leſſening to their view. She looked towards the towers of the north gate where Alzendorf was confined; ſhe regarded its high and grated windows, almoſt with an hope of receiving one laſt glance from its unfortunate inmate. But thickly grated, and covered with duſt, they ſeemed to admit no view. From her father's tranquillity, ſhe could not but fear there was ſome ſecret negotiation between them.

"Yet," cried ſhe, ſhocked at the ſuſpicion, "I have no right to ſuſpect my father; he has never exerted his parental authority. No, though his wiſhes were ſo ſtrong in favour of the Prince, he aſſumes his preſent compoſed air, moſt probably to give me comfort."

With this idea, ſhe ſtudiouſly endeavoured, by all the means in her power, to alleviate any uneaſineſs he felt; and ſhe rejoiced in

believing ſhe ſucceeded;—for when they reſted for the night, he ſeemed pretty well to have overcome the ſeriouſneſs that had clouded his countenance during the day; and as they on the morrow purſued their journey, the Baron told her ſomething of the place ſhe was about to inhabit. Joſephine felt her curioſity intereſted, as ſhe had merely heard her father poſſeſſed an eſtate in the K—— mountains; but ſhe knew not of what extent, or if at any diſtance from other reſidences.

"You have not imagined, Joſephine," ſaid the Baron, "the deep ſolitude of this place:—there are, indeed, a few ſcattered cottages belonging to the domain; but I know of no habitation that can be ſuppoſed to contain a companion for you. There is, indeed, at about two leagues' diſtance, a Caſtle, almoſt as gloomily retired as our own; but I remember when I was at St.

 Ulric,

Ulric, in my first and only visit, it was untenanted. The lady that owned it, they said, resided in Italy; and I suppose she will not be very anxious to leave that gay country, to become a resident amidst the wilds of the K—— mountains. I recollect, when I visited it, so much was I displeased with the gloominess around me, so little congenial to my then gay spirits, that I staid but for a short period; and since then I have been so much engaged, and this place offered so little inducement, that I have never visited it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

"Amid these wild woods and untrodden glades,
"No sounds but those of melancholy move;
"E'en the low wind that dies along the shades,
"Seem but soft Pity's sigh for hopeless love."

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

It was now about mid-day, and her father pointed out to her the K—— mountains, as they reared their misty heads in distance; but far was the country they had yet to pass. Still, as they approached these stupendous heights, how bare, comfortless, and

and vaſt did they appear! Here and there, indeed, their rugged ſides were clothed with woods of blackening pine.

The ſcene was, in truth, more dreary than Joſephine had imagined. She had liſtened to the touching deſcriptions of Alzendorf, till ſhe had connected with the idea of ſolitude, all the ſoftneſs of love, all that was ſoothing to the feeling mind; but theſe dark woods—theſe rugged mountains, on which the approaching twilight ſhed a more frightful gloom, how unlike were they to the ſcenes her imagination had painted! Shocked, ſhe withdrew herſelf from the ſurvey; and, ſhrinking in the carriage, ſhe ſeemed unwilling to believe it real.

The tired horſes crawled ſlowly up the ſteeps. Again deſcending, Joſephine beheld with ſurpriſe, another range of mountains ſtill to aſcend, equally wild and dreary, but

more

more wooded than the preceding. Yet ſlower did they ſeem to proceed.

"Never ſurely," thought ſhe, "will this journey be completed."

The moon was now riſing, and Joſephine found employment in watching her progreſs in the heavens. They had now attained theſe ſecond ſummits, and ſtill ſhe beheld mountainous heights beyond. The horſes reſting ſome moments to recover their exertions, Joſephine looked down on the valley beneath, and the clear moonbeams, as they reſted on it, diſcloſed to her wondering eyes, a ſcene of repoſing nature, more ſweet, more ſoft than imagination could conceive. Woods, whoſe bright verdure the eye received with delight, emboſomed a lake of ſome extent; a winding ſtream poured its ruffled waves through the valley, now glittering in the moonbeams, and now hid

beneath the thick foliage that ſhaded its banks. Deep retired in this lowly vale, Joſephine diſcerned the turrets of St. Ulric. How did her heart revive! She contemplated the ſcenery in her mind; it yet wore a ſofter ſmile in contraſt with the deſolate wilds ſhe had paſſed,

"Ah," thought ſhe, "this is indeed a ſolitude, ſuch as Alzendorf had portrayed." —and the recollection filled her eyes with tears. But, exerting herſelf to throw off the melancholy beginning to oppreſs her, ſhe addreſſed her father, and ſpoke in admiration of the picturesque valley.

"Thank Heaven, Joſephine!" ſaid he, "you can yet take pleaſure in the view of nature! Your taſte has never become vitiated. I freely confeſs to you, even at your age it had no charms for me; I had too early been an actor in the buſy ſcenes

of

of the world; I felt nothing in contemplating this valley, which draws from you ſo much admiration, but that it was encompaſſed with mountains which ſhut me from a world I ſo much wiſhed to rejoin."

Joſephine pitied her father, as ſhe heard him ſpeak thus.

"Ah," thought ſhe, "how unfit muſt you then be for the ſolitude you are about to inhabit!"

They wound along the banks of the lake for ſome time; the uneven turf and long graſs that impeded their progreſs, ſpoke it but ſeldom trod. As they approached the venerable pile, Joſephine regarded it with mixed ſenſations; ſhe knew it was a priſon, immured within whoſe walls ſhe was to remain at the will of her perſecutors. But ſhe felt it a refuge from a ſituation ſtill leſs to be deſired.

"At leaſt," ſaid ſhe, mentally, "I ſhall have liberty to indulge in the remembrance of Alzendorf, and be freed from the hated preſence of the Prince:"—and ſhe looked with pleaſure on its dark front which now preſented itſelf.

This half-ruinated ſtructure was built of grey ſtone; it had in years long paſt, been the reſidence of a ſociety of Monks, who by ſome means having fallen under the diſpleaſure of a former Duke, were diſperſed; and their lands confiſcated, had been beſtowed on an anceſtor of Baron Loſenſtein. It ſtill bore veſtiges of the purpoſe for which it was erected; though ſo greatly was it altered by its various poſſeſſors, it was impoſſible to define, from its outward appearance, whether it was a Caſtle or Abbey—whether dedicated to religion or war.

The Baron had ſent on part of his

retinue the preceding day, to prepare for his reception. They now approached with lights; and ſoon Joſephine beheld herſelf within the gloomy walls of St. Ulric. She turned to obſerve her father's countenance, but ſhe diſcovered no traces of uneaſineſs; on the contrary, he ſpoke cheerfully to the ſervants reſident in the Abbey, who approached to congratulate him on his arrival:—in ſhort, by his whole behaviour, it was impoſſible to perceive but that it was a viſit of choice.

Again ſuſpicion croſſed her mind, but again ſhe checked it.—"No," ſhe thought; "if his heart was wrung with agony, he would not betray it in the preſence of his ſervants."

They were now conducted into a large and deſolate apartment, where lights had been placed; but they ſerved only the more

to ſhew its gloomineſs. She obſerved her father glance his eyes on the dark wainſcoting.

"Ah, my father!" ſaid ſhe, "though we muſt not contraſt it with the elegant drapery of our late chambers, yet uſe will reconcile us to it."

"My Joſephine is quite a philoſopher," returned her father, with a ſmile; "but we will hope we ſhall not be called upon to exert this philoſophy, as our ſtay here may be of ſhorter duration than we at preſent imagine."

This was an alarming ſuggeſtion for poor Joſephine; and it remained upon her mind after ſhe had retired to reſt.

"But, perhaps, my father," thought ſhe, "might have only given the hint, in the hope of comforting me, as he might think my ſpirits depreſſed from my remark."

Thus

Thus appeaſing her apprehenſions, ſhe ſunk to ſleep, overcome with fatigue. When ſhe roſe on the following morning, ſhe had leiſure to examine her chamber. It was large and gloomy; its hangings, as well as thoſe of her bed, of the darkeſt green, did not in the leaſt enliven it. The windows were high, far above her reach.

"Ah," thought ſhe, "how inſenſible muſt thoſe beings have been, who ſeem voluntarily to have deprived themſelves of the only enjoyment they appeared to poſſeſs—a view of nature in her beauty!"

From her own apartment, ſhe paſſed into a ſmaller chamber adjoining; the appearance of this was a little more comfortable, though the furniture was as old, and of the ſame dark ſhade as that where ſhe ſlept. Yet it admitted a view of the beautiful valley;—as exquiſitely beautiful did it appear to her

enraptured ſight, as on the preceding evening. The rays of a refulgent ſun but diſcovered new beauties; ſhe beheld every thing covered with the brighteſt verdure; even the rocks were hardly ſterile, whoſe baſe was laved with the ſilver waters of the lake. Her heart roſe in fervent gratitude to him—

"Who in rough deſerts, far from human toil,
"Made rocks bring forth, and deſolation ſmile."

But ſoon her thoughts reverted to herſelf.

"What a change," ſaid ſhe, "in a few ſhort months! A little time paſt, and, with the dawning of day, I ſhould have riſen, impatient to explore each path of theſe wild woods. Ah! that elaſtic ſpirit, I fear, is fled for ever;"—and ſhe ſighed when ſhe thought what

what a brief acquaintance with the world had wrought this change.

Whilſt at breakfaſt, ſhe mentioned to her father her wiſh of having her chamber windows altered, ſo as to admit the proſpect; but the Baron ſeemed to expreſs no intention of altering or improving any part of the Abbey, again ſpeaking of his hopes of a ſpeedy departure. Joſephine now ventured to aſk of him on what baſis his hopes were founded.

"On the ſtrongeſt in the world—on the duty of my child!"

"Oh, what is it you would ſay?" eagerly demanded Joſephine, pale with affright.

The Baron obſerved her alarm, and perceived he had gone too far.

"Do not diſtreſs yourſelf," he tenderly replied; "I meant nothing that can give you uneaſineſs—I meant merely what I ſaid,

that

that I expected much from the obedience of my child; and from the justice of the Prince, I am convinced we shall feel the effects of it, if you continue dutifully to content yourself in this solitude, far from the sight of that man with whom the Prince is so justly incensed. I will own to you, your behaviour gave him satisfaction, from your neither having written to, nor desiring to see him, previous to your quitting S——."

Josephine felt how undeserving she was of this praise; but she rejoiced that Alzendorf could not be accused of holding a correspondence with her, for she had feared they might have taken some advantage of it.

The Baron would have continued the discourse, but it was a subject to which Josephine could not listen; and her father, observing her emotion, saw it was not the moment to urge what he further wished to say.

ſay. He permitted her, therefore, to leave him. When alone, ſhe could not but reflect on her father's myſterious conduct; ſhe could ſee no ground of hope.

"Was it probable the Prince would ſo ſoon recall them—permit her once again to behold Alzendorf, when he had ſo lately exerted his utmoſt ſtretch of power to ſeparate them?—What then could make her father appear ſo content, expreſſing, as he did, the utmoſt diſlike to ſolitude?—yet in the deepeſt retirement, appear not merely reſigned, for that might be the exertion of a ſtrong mind that reconciles itſelf to the evil that becomes inevitable; but even happy, as if nothing had occurred to interrupt his tranquillity!

In ſpite of herſelf, the gloomieſt apprehenſions would ſometimes oppreſs her; yet they held not their influence long. Soon

the

the bright form of hope chased them from her bosom; and that elastic spirit she believed for ever extinguished, again revived. The clear air of the mountains once more glowed her cheeks with the roses of health, and recalled that vivacity of mind so long weighed down by continual sorrow—and, what is yet more depressing, continual apprehensions; wondering she could not imagine what could have effected this change, for was not Alzendorf still in the power of his enemies? Yet hope would whisper her—he would soon find means to elude their vigilance, and fly to her.

"Then," thought she, "we will seek refuge in that lonely retreat, where center all our wishes, which will be to us the abode of bliss."

She sought the most retired places, that there she might indulge the sweet dreams which

which theſe thoughts inſpired. She looked on the ſolitude ſhe inhabited, with a ſort of tender enthuſiaſm; every where it preſented to her images of his love. She traced the wild paths that led to the deepeſt retreats.—"Here even in ſuch a ſpot as this," ſhe would ſay, "we will build our cottage!—theſe are the woods that ſhelter us!—and theſe are the mountains that ſhall hide us from the world."

Thus would ſhe ſooth her fancy, and thus did ſhe inſenſibly unite each object with the remembrance of Alzendorf. How much did the monotonous tranquillity of her preſent life remind her of the quiet repoſe of her early years!—how natural did this calm appear!—to her it ſeemed as if now ſhe had regained herſelf. There were ſome moments when ſhe could hardly feel perſuaded but that the laſt months of her exiſtence were a dream; but it was a dream that had left

a ſtrong

a ſtrong impreſſion. And, alas! too cruelly did her heart confeſs its reality, when a month had paſſed away, and yet had ſhe received no intelligence from Alzendorf.

"Did he not promiſe," ſaid ſhe, "that from the hour he was liberated, he would never reſt till he had found ſome means of correſpondence?"

Sometimes ſhe would think that he was ſtill detained a priſoner in the fortreſs, which continually preſented itſelf before her, and that they had only deceived him with a promiſe of liberty; but when ſhe reflected it could anſwer no purpoſe, ſhe would reject that idea for another almoſt as painful;—he might have truſted his letters to ſome unfaithful hand, who, perhaps, had betrayed him to the Prince; and, thus a ſecond time exaſperated, ſhe trembled to what extent his anger might proceed. Another and another

week

week elapſed, and ſtill no intelligence; all hope forſook her.

"Ah, too ſure," ſighed ſhe, "my fears were prophetic, when, as I wrote to him my laſt letter, I felt ſo ſtrongly I never ſhould behold him more! They have ſucceeded—they have at length alienated him from me; the ſweet ſmiles of the beautiful Counteſs have won him from me."

And though, almoſt inſtantly, ſhe reproached herſelf for the ſuppoſition, yet the idea would continually recur.—Alas! Joſephine had forgot thoſe words ſhe had repeated to her lover—"Let us never add to our afflictions by one inſtant doubting each other."

She could no longer conceal her uneaſineſs; ſhe wept inceſſantly. Her father was affected by the change he perceived, and wondered what could thus ſuddenly have excited

excited it. In vain he ſought to learn the ſource of her tears. Joſephine was too mournfully convinced ſhe might not confide in him; the artifices of others had taught her likewiſe to be on her guard. She therefore carefully concealed the cauſe of her grief, replying only to his queſtions by aſking him, what cauſe had ſhe to rejoice, cut off as ſhe was from ſociety, even deprived the conſoling preſence of her friend Olivia?

She thought her father appeared incredulous; and ſhe felt ſhocked that he might equally reproach her with diſſimulation; ſhe could not endure his penetrating and reproachful looks, or the neceſſity to ſtill ſeek for new deceit in the anſwers ſhe was forced to return to his repeated queſtions. She therefore hid herſelf as much as poſſible from his ſight, and again ſhe ſought the moſt retired ſpots, where, unobſerved by

human

human eye, ſhe could pour forth her ſorrows; and thoſe ſtreams, whoſe murmurings had once ſoothed her viſionary bliſs, were now witneſs to her tears;—ſhe retraced with heavineſs, her accuſtomed paths: but it is impoſſible to expreſs the bitterneſs of her feelings, as ſhe contemplated thoſe ſpots ſhe had conſecrated ſo particularly to the remembrance of Alzendorf.

Though by thus indulging her grief when alone, ſhe was enabled to appear before her father with ſome compoſure; yet he ſaw in her altered appearance enough to alarm him. Her eyes, inflamed with weeping, and the ſighs that broke from her, notwithſtanding her utmoſt endeavours to ſuppreſs them—the melancholy and paleneſs of her countenance, which ſo lately glowed with health—and the increaſed impatience ſhe expreſſed when he named to her the Prince, convinced him ſhe had

received

received ſome new cauſe of affliction: nor could it be difficult to divine from whence it had ariſen.

"She had expected, ere this, to receive ſome intelligence from Alzendorf," thought he; and he could not but rejoice in the failure of her expectations: for he conceived, and conceived juſtly, one neglect of Alzendorf's would do more towards eradicating her unfortunate prepoſſeſſion, than the utmoſt exertion of their art could effect.

He hoped and believed the ſorrow he perceived her plunged in, would be tranſitory; he therefore permitted her to indulge it in ſolitude. This was indeed an indulgence for Joſephine:—to be releaſed from the conſtraint of her father's preſence, was all ſhe now ſought; and to hear no longer the name of a man ſhe deteſted, more than ever of a man who had involved her in the greateſt

evils by his arbitary and cruel conduct—yet to hear of his many virtues, and from lips ſhe was obliged to reſpect—from the lips of a parent, gave her inexpreſſible pain! To eſcape this, and the more fully to indulge her melancholy thoughts, ſhe would continue her rambles—

"Oft till the ſtar that roſe at evening bright,
"To'ards heaven's deſcent had ſlop'd his weſtering wheel."

END OF VOL. I.

LANE, MINERVA PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

Just published,

THE AUNT AND THE NIECE,

TWO VOLUMES, 12MO.

Price 8s. sewed.